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ABSTRACT

This guide is intended for high school seniors who are making decisions about what to do after school. It includes eight chapters, two appendices, and a final note for parents. Chapter 1 deals with self-understanding and includes a self-assessment exercise. Chapter 2 discusses the pros and cons of taking time out between high school and college. Chapter 3 deals with working at an entry-level job after high school before going on to college. Chapter 4 discusses money management for job holders. Chapter 5 discusses the internship alternative to an entry-level job. The option of military service is discussed in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 discusses the possibility of early college admission for students who have completed high school requirements or who are not being intellectually stimulated by their high school classes. Finally, chapter 8 offers advice and information about choosing a college. A brief listing of colleges that have nonstandard requirements or address specific minority concerns and a list of 20 resources on colleges and universities are contained in the appendixes. Other references are cited in the various chapters in the margins of the pages. The note to parents encourages listening and good communication skills between parents and students. (CML)

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CHOICES

by Bryna J. Fireside

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CHOICES: A STUDENT SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR THE 1990s

by Bryna J. Fireside

About the author...

Bryna J. Fireside has devoted most of her career to the field of education. Trained as a teacher, she earned a BA in English from Rutgers University and an MA in Education from Cornell University. She has taught in the public schools of Chicago, Baltimore, and New York City. She taught part-time for four years at the Interdisciplinary Center of Ithaca College, where she also supervised student teachers in high school English.

For the past ten years she has been writing full time, and has had over 250 articles published in such magazines and newspapers as The New York Times Book Review, The Christian Science Monitor, Seventeen, The American Agriculturist, Single Parent, Parents' Choice, and the Education Life section of The New York Times. She is author of several books for both children and adults, including, A Crow for Courage (Human Policy Press. 1978), co-author of The Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice (Temple University Press. 1986), as well as the forthcoming The Social Activists (Dillon Press) and co-author of Special Parents, Special Children (Albert Whitman).

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In loving memory of Isador Levenberg, whose trust in his children had surprising consequences.

Dedicated to Leela, Doug and Dan who were the inspiration for the book, and to Harvey, who encouraged me.

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INTRODUCTION

Each year thousands of high school seniors dutifully fill out college applications, take the SAT's or ACT's and get into at least one college of their choice. Four or five years later these same thousands of young men and women will graduate from college, enter the 'real' world work and live happily ever after. That's the way it's supposed to work. Right? But not always.

"What is this place? Where are we now?"
Carl Sandburg

Some of you are really bored with high school and would like to be in college right now. Some of you may be feeling so overloaded with academics, that you'd like to put your college education on hold and explore other options. Perhaps, for reasons that aren't clear even to you, you're not really doing well academically. If you are one who is always being told "doesn't work to his/her potential" going on to college right away could be a waste of your time and your and your parents' money.

Perhaps you are someone who feels you've gotten all you can out of your high school and really want to be in college right now. You may be ready for that kind of academic challenge.

If you are feeling like a square peg in a round hole, take heart. Lots of other students have felt the way you do. And lots of them have done the unexpected and survived. They have even become the kind of solid citizens their parents are proud of, despite the fact that they didn't do exactly what all their friends were doing, or didn't follow in somebody else's footsteps.

This book will help you define your choices. You will read about people, like yourself, who are risk-takers; people who were willing to think through their options and make decisions. They were even willing to take ridicule from friends and relatives, argue constructively with parents and guidance counselors about how to spend the next year or two of their lives doing something they believed in— even if it meant leaving home and striking out on their own.

A set of <u>What Can I Do if I'm Good</u> in leaflets is available from the Log Cabin Publishers (PO Box 1536, Allentown, PA 18105). Subjects covered include English, science, mathematics, social studies, languages, fine arts, vocational arts, business education, and physical education. Cost $1.00 each.

Not everything that people tried was an unqualified success. Sometimes a coveted job or internship turned out to be awful. And more than one person who went to college as an early admission student felt overwhelmed by the challenge, and wondered if she or he had made the right choice. More often than not, the fear of failure, and the possibility of someone saying, "I knew it wouldn't work," was enough to keep a person going until things got better. And even unhappy

experiences seemed to have their own peculiar set of rewards. If there was a common thread that ran through all the interviews, it was that kids your age have a tremendous spirit of adventure, and that by striking out in a new or different direction, they feel as if at last they are taking charge of their own lives.

By reading this book I hope that you will be helped in your choice of that next step on the road to adulthood. Maybe you'll decide that your fears about college or your unhappiness with your present situation are just the normal stuff everyone else is experiencing before a new event, and you'd best go along the way everyone else is. That's terrific. You've made a good decision.

Making Career Choices is the name of a booklet prepared by New York state counselors. Order for $1.50 from Barnes and Noble Bookstore, SUNY, 1400 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12222.

But perhaps you will encounter people and ideas in this book which will make you sit up and say, "Hey, that's just the way I see things. If someone else did it, so can I." That's just great. You've made a good decision, too.

The truth is, there is no one absolutely right way to become an adult. And there is no possible way to grow up without making mistakes. But the important thing to realize is that even if you do make mistakes, it's not the end of the world. The people who contributed their stories to this book will tell you some of the best and the worst things that happened to them. And they'll sometimes admit that they learned the most from their mistakes.

So, the best of luck in whatever you choose to do, and remember to plan on having fun along the way.

A NOTE ABOUT THE DESIGN OF THIS BOOK:

There is a lot of space left in the margins, as well as interesting quotes and bits of information on sources that might interest you. You'll find books and pamphlets listed along with prices. Some of them have excellent information on career or college choices. Many of these resource books are available in your school or public libraries. Additionally, you'll find the addresses of many special programs and deadlines for applications.

CHAPTER I

WHO AM I ? AND WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

Right now you are supposed to be having the time of your life. Yet, during your last two years of high school, you are also supposed to be planning for your future. This can be really tough. Sometimes it's difficult just to figure out what to do on Saturday night, let alone plan out the rest of your life. And sometimes it's easier to sketch out the big picture, but impossible to decide what college to attend, what subjects you really like or even if now is the right time to go to college.

- Your parents are telling you you have to go to college.
- Your teachers tell you without an education you'll never earn money to support yourself.
- Your music tells you the most important thing in life is falling in love.
- Your friends are telling you to live for the moment.
- And inside of you is a small voice that is saying, "Hey, stop the world, I want to get off."

Career Map: Deciding What You Want, Getting It, and Keeping It is a good general book about planning your next moves written by a career counselor at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Order for $12.95 from John Wiley (605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158).

Jorge Deustua, of Austin, Texas, yearned to travel throughout Europe before he settled down to university life. With not much money and no hope of financial help from either of his parents, he applied to Rotary International, which has student exchange programs in 54 different countries. Students live with three or four different families for a year, and attend the local high school— even if, as in Jorge's case, they have already completed American high school education. "I applied to go to Denmark, since I knew that it would be harder to get accepted into the more popular countries such as France, England, Germany or Spain."

Once Jorge cleared the interview hurdles, he set about financing his adventure. Even though food and housing was to be provided by the host families, Jorge still had to earn his plane fare and enough money for travel and other expenses for the entire year. "By working all throughout my senior year and up until the very last minute in July, I had socked away nearly $2,000. And with last minute help from family and relatives, I left the States in satisfactory financial shape. So long as I was careful, I'd have enough money to take trips, to visit other countries, go skiing, and lots of other good stuff I'd never done before."

Living with strangers was not always easy, Jorge admitted. "And sometimes cultural differences can make for difficulties." Yet, looking back to that year, now that he is a sophomore at the University of Texas in Austin, Jorge says, "It was one of the most rewarding things I've ever done, and I'll carry the

memories with me forever."

All Andy Garrison, of Newark, New Jersey, could think of when he graduated high school was how to get away from Newark. "College wasn't even a remote possibility back then," recalled Andy. "And even if it was, I wouldn't have known what to study anyway. But six months after graduation, I realized that the only kinds of jobs I was ever going to get were ones that didn't pay much money and were boring.

"So one day I stopped off at the Air Force Recruitment headquarters after work. I started talking with the guys there, and a little later took the ASVAB test that's required of all recruits. It turned out that the test showed I had a real aptitude for telecommunications— heck, I didn't even know what the word meant! But it sure sounded better than spending the rest of my life working at McDonald's."

After thinking things over for about a month, Andy signed with the Air Force for a four-year hitch. "I made sure to sign on for the college education option." When Andy left the Air Force four years later he had over $10,000 in his education fund, and a healthy savings account to boot. "Besides the money," Andy said, "I'd sorted out what I really wanted to study— and where I wanted to live." Today Andy is working towards a BS degree in telecommunications management at Golden Gate University in San Francisco. "And that," he says with a grin, "is about as far away from my hometown as you can get and still be in the U.S. of A."

Formed with support from a group of college presidents, Campus Compact: The Project for Public and Community Service (PO Box 1975, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912) distributes a list of fellowships open to students who volunteer for service projects today.

Mary Beth Carter, from Hazleton, Pennsylvania, always felt like a complete outsider in her hometown. "I was the kid who knew all the answers before anyone else. So all the teachers loved to call on me, and the kids almost all hated me. Until I was in seventh grade and had the opportunity to attend the CTY (Center for the Development of Academically Talented Youth) program at Johns Hopkins, I thought I'd never have any friends at all." But that all changed once Mary Beth discovered other students like herself who loved to learn, and who were eager to share their knowledge. "For the next couple of years, all that I thought about during the school year was the CTY summer program. I wished that I could have that kind of learning atmosphere all the time."

When a sophomore in high school, Mary Beth learned about an "early college" called Simon's Rock of Bard College in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. It's a college that is especially designed for the younger college student. "Simon's Rock saved my sanity," Mary Beth admitted. "It's a small liberal arts college where all the students are young. Most of us have skipped at least one or two years of high school.

"I'm going to graduate this year with a BA in English. I've

been writing my honor's thesis on Sylvia Plath, the poet, and after I graduate, I think I'll take a year off and do some traveling before deciding about graduate school. I might even decide to get another BA before I do grad school. But the important thing about being an early college student, is that I really am happy with who I am, and I've made friends here that I think I'll have for life."

The National Association of Trade and Technical Schools (PO Box 10429, Rockville, MD 20850) publishes a series of free booklets including Handbook of Private Accredited Trade and Technical Schools, How to Choose a Career School, and Working Women: Opportunities for Women in Trade and Technical Fields.

"I just knew when I finished high school I'd never set foot in a school again," said Andrea Morton of Ithaca, New York, with a laugh. "I knew exactly what I wanted to do. I'd been working part time in a fashionable clothing shop while I was in high school, and the owner had offered me a full-time job. At the time $120 a week sounded like a magnificent sum of money, and the 50% discount on clothing was like a dream come true."

A year later, however, the glamour of the job began to pale, and her closet was now stuffed with clothes. "I realized that I wasn't having so much fun. All of my high school friends were off at college, meeting lots of new people, learning a whole bunch of stuff, and I was working five days a week, doing the same thing every day.I started to think about taking some courses at the local community college." The courses at the community college upgraded her self-esteem, and a year later Andrea applied to and was accepted into the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City where she's working towards an Associate of Arts degree in textile design. "Who knows,"she remarked. "I may even decide to go for a BA. Being back in school again isn't so bad after all. But still, I'm glad that I took a couple of years out."

How are you going to tell if you're the kind of person who will be making the right choice if you do the traditional thing: high school, college, career, and maybe graduate or professional school sandwiched in there somewhere?

How will you know if you decide to go to college a year or two early, you won't be throwing away your childhood and won't be growing up too fast?

By the year 2000, women will hold an estimated 47.5 percent of all jobs, up from 29.6 percent in 1950.

How can you know that if you decide to postpone college for a couple of years, you will return to complete your education? Maybe after a year or two away from the books, you won't remember how to study.

Well, first of all, you can look at some facts:

According to the US Department of Labor, the employment picture for high school graduates compared to college graduates will not be good.

For example, in 1988 the median income for men aged 25-

34 with a high school education was $21,000, while the median income for male college graduates in the same age bracket had risen to $30,000. Ten years earlier the gap was only $4,000.

Although many more people are employed today than ever before, jobs that traditionally paid high salaries to high school graduates are dwindling fast. Among those which will see a serious decline between now and the year 2000 are:

Electrical and electronics assemblers
Electronic semiconductor processors
Railroad conductors, yardmasters, brake, signal and switch operators
Industrial truck and tractor operators
Gas and petroleum plant and system occupations
Farmers
Stenographers
Farm workers
Directory assistance operators

Among the jobs which will continue to be in demand for those without a college degree are:

Salespersons
Waitpeople
Registered nurses
Janitors and cleaners
Truckdrivers
General office clerks
Food preparation workers
Cooks
Gardeners and groundskeepers
Dining room and cafeteria attendants

Need a Lift? cites hundreds of programs to help finance additional education. Free copies are available through many high school counselors or write the American Legion (National Sales Office, PO Box 1050, Indianapolis, IN 46206) and send $1.00 for your own copy.

So while the good news is that there will be many new jobs for high school graduates, the bad news is that these jobs don't pay as well as did those jobs in industry. For those with one or more college degrees, the picture is much brighter as we approach the twenty-first century. Among the jobs in demand will be:

Legal assistants
Medical assistants
Physical therapists
Podiatrists
Employment interviewers
Computer programmers
Dental hygienists
Dental assistants
Physician's assistants
Occupational therapists

Optometrists
Accountants and auditors
Lawyers
Electrical and electronics engineers

These projections normally are for people who are at least ten years older than you. You've got lots of time to consider your options.

From a strictly financial point of view, post-high school education (i.e., college or trade school) is practically a must. True, there are stories of geniuses and millionaires who never finished high school. Just like there are always a few folks who win millions of dollars in the lottery. If you are sure you are going to be one of those people, then you don't have to read any further. Just go ahead and make your first million. (But later on, plan some additional education, anyway! You may need a college education to figure out how to spend that money wisely.)

Offbeat Careers: The Directory of Unusual Work describes over 80 unusual and interesting occupations. This sells for $6.95 from the Ten Speed Press (PO Box 7123, Berkeley, CA 94707).

Keep in mind that there is no absolutely right way to figure out your life. What is right for you may not work for your younger brother. What is fine for your best girl friend may be all wrong for you. And just because "they all" are going to one hot-shot university or "they all" are stopping out of school, it doesn't mean that's what you should do.

If you're one of the many normally confused teenagers (Yes, being confused is normal. It's a condition that occasionally even affects adults more than they like to admit), take some time to think about the kinds of things that interest you, the skills you already have, and those you feel are worth developing.

ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE

Remember, you will be spending all of your adult life in the 21st century. There is no way anyone can predict exactly what skills and abilities will be useful 10, 20 or 30 years from now. Teenagers who lived in the late 1800's had no way to know that in their lifetime they would drive a car, some of the adventurous ones would learn to fly airplanes, or that a few of their grandchildren would walk on the moon.

"Those whose work and play are one are fortune's favorite children."
Winston Churchill

Change is inevitable. You need to learn to accept change, to try new things and adapt to new situations in the unknowable future. Whether you feel excited, terrified or indifferent about change doesn't matter. But knowing yourself, your talents and capabilities will help you to be ready to move on.

Dr. George Conneman, Director of Instruction at the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, cautions young people that "in this day and

"There's no harm in being sometimes wrong especially if one is promptly found out."
John Maynard Keynes

age, without a college education, a person will have difficulty making it." So although you may not be sure of what it is you want to do, or even what's out there for you, it's important to keep your options open. Dr. Conneman says, "We can't even conceive what the 21st century will be like, and a good education that includes decision-making skills is what it's all about."

There's no better time to start thinking about what's very special about you than right now.

KNOW THYSELF

Here is a "test" you may want to try. Actually, it isn't really a test. It's a tool to help you create a picture of yourself. There are no wrong or right answers to any of the questions. Since there is no score, you can't flunk. It can be most helpful if your responses are genuinely yours, rather than anyone else's idea of what you should do. And no matter how you answer the questions, you won't find out what you should be when you grow up. But you may get some clues as to the direction you can take over the next couple of years.

Financial Aid for the Disabled and Their Families cites 500 sources of assistance for education and training. Costs $35.00 from the References Service Press (10 Twin Dolphin Drive, Suite B-308, Redwood City, CA 94065).

The items on the test represent a variety of skills, attitudes, personal qualities, information and understandings you may or may not have — and you may or may not want to have. All of the items are included because each at some time, in some place, somebody believed they were important in the adult world. No one, regardless of age or achievement, would be apt to place him or herself at the high end for all the items, nor is it likely that anyone would want or need to.

What you are invited to do is think about your skills and your personal development. You are invited to consider what you believe you are good at, and to figure out if you want to put your energy into improving in some weak areas over the next year or so, or if you want to use your particular strengths in a new way.

The idea for this self-assessment test came from Joan Webster who for many years taught and counseled men and women at Goddard College and then at Vermont College. She developed this test for people who were starting college as older students. Many of them had been housewives and mothers. Others had worked in factories and on farms. Many were unsure of the skills they had and the abilities needed for college. This helped them sort things out. Together Ms. Webster and I have revised the test so that it can help you think about your own development as a young person on the brink of adulthood.

You may want to assess yourself more than once. It's a good idea to make several copies of the test before marking the test up. If you copy it on different colored paper, it may help when you go back and check yourself out. Try it now, and after you've had a chance to think about it, put it away. Then, in a couple of months after you have decided on future plans and have been doing it for a while, take it again. You will be amazed at how many new skills you've acquired and how many things have changed. If you study the results carefully, they will help you create many pictures of yourself that will move you into the adult world.

"People don't resist change, they resist being changed."
Charles L. Hughes
Center for Values Research

Of course, there are many other kinds of aptitude tests given by educational professionals. A good test may help you sort out what professions may be right for you. Many tests are based upon the special interests and skills of successful lawyers, teachers, scientists, etc. The theory is that certain people with particular personality traits tend to do well in certain careers. However, even if it turns out that you share the same traits as do successful surgeons, if you can't stand the sight of blood, you'd probably do well to stay away from medicine — but you may want to consider other fields in which you are working with people — guidance counseling, for example. There are many tests that are geared to helping students define their choices. They go by many different names and test for a variety of things. There is the Strong Campbell Inventory Test, which measures your interests against 100 people who are happy and successful in a variety of careers, SIGI, a computerized values clarification test, the Jackson Vocational Interest Survey, Kuder Preference Record, which measures occupational interests, to name just a few. Your high school guidance counselor can tell you where you can take these tests if you are interested in finding out more. Yet, no one test pretends to hold all the answers for you. You still need to follow what is in your heart.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

NAME _____ DATE _____

For each item, show your judgement of yourself by filling in spaces to create a bar. You may stop at any bar anywhere between low and high. The broken lines are guides indicating quarter points along the continuum.

e.g.

Writing ability	LOW		X	HIGH
	Writing is something I don't do well	My writing is not horrible, but it isn't great	My writing ability is all right but could be better	Writing is something I do very well

PART I
GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS

	LOW	HIGH
Writing ability	———/———/———/———	
Reading comprehension	———/———/———/———	
Ability to express ideas orally	———/———/———/———	
Ability to understand what others say	———/———/———/———	
Ability to ask questions	———/———/———/———	
Ability to seek and try solutions to problems	———/———/———/———	
Ability to solve complex mathematical problems	———/———/———/———	
Ability to do everyday mathematical problems	———/———/———/———	
Ability to concentrate on difficult reading material	———/———/———/———	
Ability to formulate questions	———/———/———/———	
Ability to seek out teachers & other experts to help clarify difficult material	———/———/———/———	
Ability to work independently in library	———/———/———/———	

	LOW	HIGH
Ability to organize school work efficiently	----/----/----/----	
Ability to study with other students	----/----/----/----	
Ability to study difficult material alone	----/----/----/----	
Ability to complete school work on time	----/----/----/----	
Ability to complete assignments in subjects that are least liked	----/----/----/----	
Ability to become absorbed in a new subject	----/----/----/----	
Ability to share ideas with classmates	----/----/----/----	

PART II- PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL ATTITUDES AND QUALITIES

PERSONAL

	LOW	HIGH
Self-confidence	----/----/----/----	
Physical fitness	----/----/----/----	

Ability to set short-range personal goals

List three short-range goals, if possible ----/----/----/----

1.
2.
3.

Ability to set long -range personal goals

List three long-range goals, if possible ----/----/----/----

1.
2.
3.

Tolerance for frustration	----/----/----/----	
Development of a personal value system	----/----/----/----	

Indicate what you value most, if possible

1.
2.
3.

	LOW				HIGH
Ability to finish projects you initiate	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to work without supervision	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to be alone	————	————	————	————	————
Willingness to try something physically demanding	————	————	————	————	————
Willingness to change plans for a new challenge	————	————	————	————	————
Willingness to learn new tasks	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to take criticism	————	————	————	————	————
Willingness to take a calculated risk	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to receive compliments	————	————	————	————	————
Willingness to be innovative	————	————	————	————	————
Willingness to challenge yourself	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to act on intuition	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to appreciate your own strengths	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to like yourself	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to bounce back after you've been criticized	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to laugh at yourself	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to make use of leisure time	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to develop new hobbies	————	————	————	————	————

INTERPERSONAL

	LOW				HIGH
Ability to work with peers	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to work with older people	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to adapt to new situations	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to get along with different kinds of people who are the same age	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to get along with older people	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to ' fit in' with new social situations	————	————	————	————	————
Willingness to take 'orders' from someone who may not be as 'smart' as you	————	————	————	————	————
Ability to do a boring or unpleasant task for pay	————	————	————	————	————
Willingness to learn new tasks	————	————	————	————	————

Ability to 'make the best of things' ———/———/———/———

Willingness to stick to your 'guns' when you're convinced you're right ———/———/———/———

INFORMATION AND SKILLS

Acquisition of specific information or skill

Name your special interests ———/———/———/———

1.
2.
3.

INFORMATION

LOW HIGH

Knowledge of how city and county government works ———/———/———/———

Knowledge of how state government works ———/———/———/———

Knowledge of local issues ———/———/———/———

Name specific ones of concern

1.
2.
3.

Knowledge of national affairs ———/———/———/———

Name specific issues of concern

1.
2.
3.

Knowledge of world affairs ———/———/———/———

Name specific issues of concern

1.
2.
3.

Knowledge of history

1. world ———/———/———/———
2. national ———/———/———/———
3. state ———/———/———/———
4. local ———/———/———/———

	LOW			HIGH
Understanding of others' cultures				
Specify, if possible	———	———	———	———
1.				
2.				
3.				
Understanding of how people behave and why	———	———	———	———
Knowledge of the sciences	———	———	———	———
Name areas, if possible				
1.				
2.				
3.				
Exploring the arts (art, music, drama, dance)	———	———	———	———
Name activities and forms				
1.				
2.				
3.				
Knowledge of mathematics	———	———	———	———
Understanding of your own past	———	———	———	———
Knowledge of where different countries of the world are on world map	———	———	———	———
Knowledge of the geography of the United States	———	———	———	———
Knowledge of computers				
word processing	———	———	———	———
programming	———	———	———	———
computer language	———	———	———	———

SKILLS

Skill in reading and understanding maps	———	———	———	———
Skill in working with hands	———	———	———	———
Specific areas				
1.				
2.				
3.				
Skill in working with complex machines	———	———	———	———
Specific machines:				
1.				
2.				
3.				

	LOW				HIGH
Skills in repairing appliances and small machines	— — —	— — —	— — —	— — —	— — —
Specific ones:					
1.					
2.					
3.					
Skills in 'hospitality' areas such as food preparation, serving, etc.	— — —	— — —	— — —	— — —	— — —
Skills in retail selling, such as waiting on customers, operating a cash register	— — —	— — —	— — —	— — —	— — —
Skills in office work such as typing, filing, filling orders	— — —	— — —	— — —	— — —	— — —

Add any other skills, personal qualities or kinds of information you are interested in tracking:

The first time you do the self-assessment, look over your responses and ask yourself the following questions:

PART I - General Academic Skills

1. Which areas do I see as my strongest?

2. Of these, which do I want to explore and develop further?

3. Which information and skill areas are not my strong points?

4. Of those, which do I want to explore and develop? Why?

5. Of those areas which I want to develop further, which are for "some day" and which are for "now"?

PART II - Personal and Interpersonal

1. What are the qualities and attitudes I identified as strongest in part II?

2. Of these, which do I want to develop further?

3. Which things do I want to work on now, and which do I want to set aside for "some day" ?

4. Which attitudes and qualities do I think will help me in planning my next step?

When you have done more than one self-assessment, place the last two next to each other and ask yourself about the changes you see in your responses. Ask yourself, "How do I explain each difference? Was each the result of a plan or did it just happen? What do I want to do next? What should I shelve for a later time?"

Take time to appreciate yourself before deciding what to do next, whether you are doing the assessment for the first time or comparing versions. The good thing is you don't need to learn everything at once. You've got a whole lifetime ahead of you, and you will be learning all the time.

In the following chapters you will read about people your age who made choices about their immediate future that didn't exactly match what their friends were doing. As you read about what they did and how they did it, you may want to think how they would have responded to the self-assessment test you've just completed. And you may want to consider how you might feel attempting something a little off the beaten track.

CHAPTER II

STOPPING OUT: IS IT RIGHT FOR YOU?

"Taking time out can bring students out of their shell. Students who are willing to move beyond the normal framework of their adolescent life have motivation, and will be better prepared to handle the rigors of academic life."

Richard Pierson,
Dean of Admissions,
Clark University

Should you put your college education on hold? The answer may be a resounding "yes." You probably think you have sound reasons for making this decision. Yet you might have to mount a major campaign to convince your parents, your friends and even your guidance counselor that you are acting in a responsible way. A lot depends upon why you want to interrupt your education and what you plan to do. The more thoroughly you have thought it through, the more likely you will be to actually enlist your parents' help in your cause.

WHO STOPS OUT?

Those who need to raise money so they can go to college.
Students who take themselves seriously and are self-directed.
Students who have no real reason for being in college.
Students with early academic "burn-out."
Independent-minded students who are not overly influenced by their peers.
Students for whom an unusual opportunity presents itself.
Out-going, high achievers who are risk -takers.

One group of people who are enthusiastic about students taking time out between high school and college are deans of admissions at many prestigious colleges and universities. "Most of us are positive toward delayed entry," said Admissions Officer Susan P. Staggers of Mount Hoyoke College. If more students had a chance to take time off, they would get more out of their formal education."

Yet there are compelling arguments for going directly to college after high school.

Going to college right after high school is the normal and traditional thing to do.
By going to college right away, a person can make realistic plans for a career.
Entering college right after high school keeps up the momentum of study habits most recently acquired.
It will be easier to make friends during freshman year if everybody is roughly the same age.
If you intend to take a year out to work or study abroad or do an internship, having some college years behind you puts you in a better position to get into these programs.

PARENTS NEED TO BE CONVINCED

One thing that will help you prove to your parents that you are mature enough to make this kind of decision is to step away from yourself and your own problems for a moment, and think about why your parents might not go along with your decision. Once you understand their concerns, you have a much better chance of marshalling your arguments and gaining their approval. Remember, the more information you have before you bring up your plans, the better chance you'll have of arguing your case successfully. Not surprisingly, once parents understand that what you are doing is a positive action and not a negative one, they may even be pleased with your decision—or at least accept it.

STOPOUT: Working Ways to Learn tells more about the value and problems associated with stopouts. Available for $7.95 from The Garrett Park Press (PO Box 190 B, Garrett Park, MD 20896).

Here are some objections your parents may raise:

You will be wasting time.
Everybody else is going to college and you will lose all your friends.
You may never go to college if you stop out.
You won't learn anything of value by stopping out.
You're too young to make that kind of decision.
It will be too difficult to learn to study after you've been away from the books.
Once you get to college you'll be glad that you listened to us.
It's always been our dream to send you to college.

"If you don't have any real good reason of your own for being in college, then you might do well to consider stopping out for a year or two. But no matter what you do, these late teen years are difficult times."

David Smith, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, Syracuse University

WHO STOPPED OUT AND WHY; A NEED TO PROVE ONESELF

Doug Leonard from Northampton, Massachusetts, knew by the middle of his sophomore year in high school that he didn't want to go to college right away. At that stage in his life school wasn't a high priority, and his grades often reflected his lack of interest.

"Actually, " he admitted, "I wanted to quit school altogether. I'd felt I'd had enough." His parents pointed out that quitting high school would have very serious consequences. "You'll be cutting yourself off from all kinds of jobs," they cautioned. "And if you do decide you ever want to go to college, you will have a very, very hard time getting in if you don't finish high school."

Realistically, Doug knew that his parents were right. But his desire to get away from school was so strong that he checked with his guidance counselor to find the quickest way to graduate. " I wanted time to think about who I really was, and what I wanted to do with myself."

Once Doug figured out how to graduate a year early, he

really put his mind to it. He even took the SAT's and was surprised to find out he'd scored quite well on them. That was an important thing for him to do. First, it sent a direct signal to his parents that he was stopping out and not "dropping out."

Second, Doug was keeping his options open, so that when he decided he was ready to apply to college, his test scores were on file. Six months after he turned 16, Doug received his high school diploma, and was eager to look for a job. "I wanted to prove that I could be something besides a student."

"It can be a very positive experience to get out of the educational lockstep and gain some experience and a perspective. It shows that a person is independent minded enough not to be overly influenced by peers."

James H. Rogers, Director of Admissions, Brown University

TIME OUT FOR REFLECTION

Leana Horowitz came from a very small town in upstate New York. She was an outstanding student, and had spent her junior year as a high school Rotary exchange student in Japan. It was during this year abroad that her mother first suggested she consider taking a year off after completing high school to reflect upon her Japanese experience.

"We corresponded frequently during that year, and gradually the idea took hold." Her father, however, was not in favor of it at all. "He thought that if I took a year off, I'd never go to college. But in my mind, that was never a problem. I love school."

The following year, Leana applied to and was accepted to Harvard University. On the acceptance form there was a check-off for a deferred admission. When Leana pointed this out to her dad, he relaxed a little. He realized that stopping out was not just a whim of Leana's In fact, at some universities, as many as 10% of incoming freshman opt to defer admission for a year or more. Once Leana was assured, in writing, that her financial aid package would not be changed (unless, of course, the family income changed) she checked the deferred admission box. Like Doug, she decided that she wanted to work and set about looking for a job.

The Young American's Scholarship Guide to Travel and Learning Abroad describes over 4,000 scholarship opportunities in more than 80 countries for Americans who have not yet enrolled in college. Costs $12.95 plus $2.00 shipping from Intervaco Press, 211 E 43rd Street, Suite 1303, New York, NY 10017).

A YEARNING FOR ADVENTURE

Kiran Sigmon's decision to put her college education on hold came after she'd been accepted to college. She'd even agreed to room with one of her high school friends, and "follow in the same mold as everyone else" she knew. Yet, she remembered being very uneasy about the whole college application process. She wasn't certain the college she'd chosen was the best one for her, and she found herself becoming depressed. "I began to think that it was going to be a waste of money."

What really captured Kiran's attention was Operation Raleigh, an adventure and leadership program started by England's Prince Charles. It had its American headquarters in Kiran's hometown of Raleigh, North Carolina. Kiran had

followed stories about the kinds of expeditions Operation Raleigh ran for young, adventurous men and women to all parts of the world. Without telling a soul, she applied. "After I'd sent in my application, I told my parents about it. I told them that I really didn't want to go to college. I wanted to go to New Zealand. I said I would stay home and work and raise the money I needed for the trip, if I were selected."

While Kiran's parents were very supportive once she'd been picked to go to New Zealand, it was very difficult for Kiran to tell her friends that they weren't going to be roommates. And it was even harder to deal with parents of friends. "Many thought I'd taken a lazy way out." Others accused Kiran of wanting to become a social butterfly, and even her own parents voiced a concern that once away from the books it would be very hard to come back and go to school.

"Stopping out can bring a greater degree of maturity but it won't mitigate a poor academic record. However, a university such as Cornell would look for a wide range of experiences and, given two equally well qualified candidates, the one with the wider range of experience might have an edge over the more traditional student."

Ann V. York, former Director of Admissions, Cornell University

A NEED FOR A NEW EXPERIENCE

Except for one guidance counselor in her high school in Williamston, Michigan, Gloria Shepard had no support from either friends or family for her decision to take a year off between high school and college. Although she was an excellent student, she felt that she wasn't ready to make an informed choice of college. "I knew I wanted to do something really different. I wanted to get away from Michigan and the things I already knew."

The perceptive guidance counselor suggested that Gloria check out an internship program in Worcester, Massachusetts, called Dynamy, Incorporated. This program provides high school graduates with choices of numerous internships over a yearlong period in many different areas of the working world. Participants in Dynamy gain experience in living in apartments with other interns, and take part in a strenuous Outward Bound program.

"My parents were really against this," Gloria said. My mother thought I wouldn't be able to get into college, and my father thought it was just a bad idea." But to Gloria, it was a chance of a lifetime. Even though she got no financial help from home, her application was so strong that she received a full scholarship to Dynamy. "I only had to pay for my travel expenses," she said.

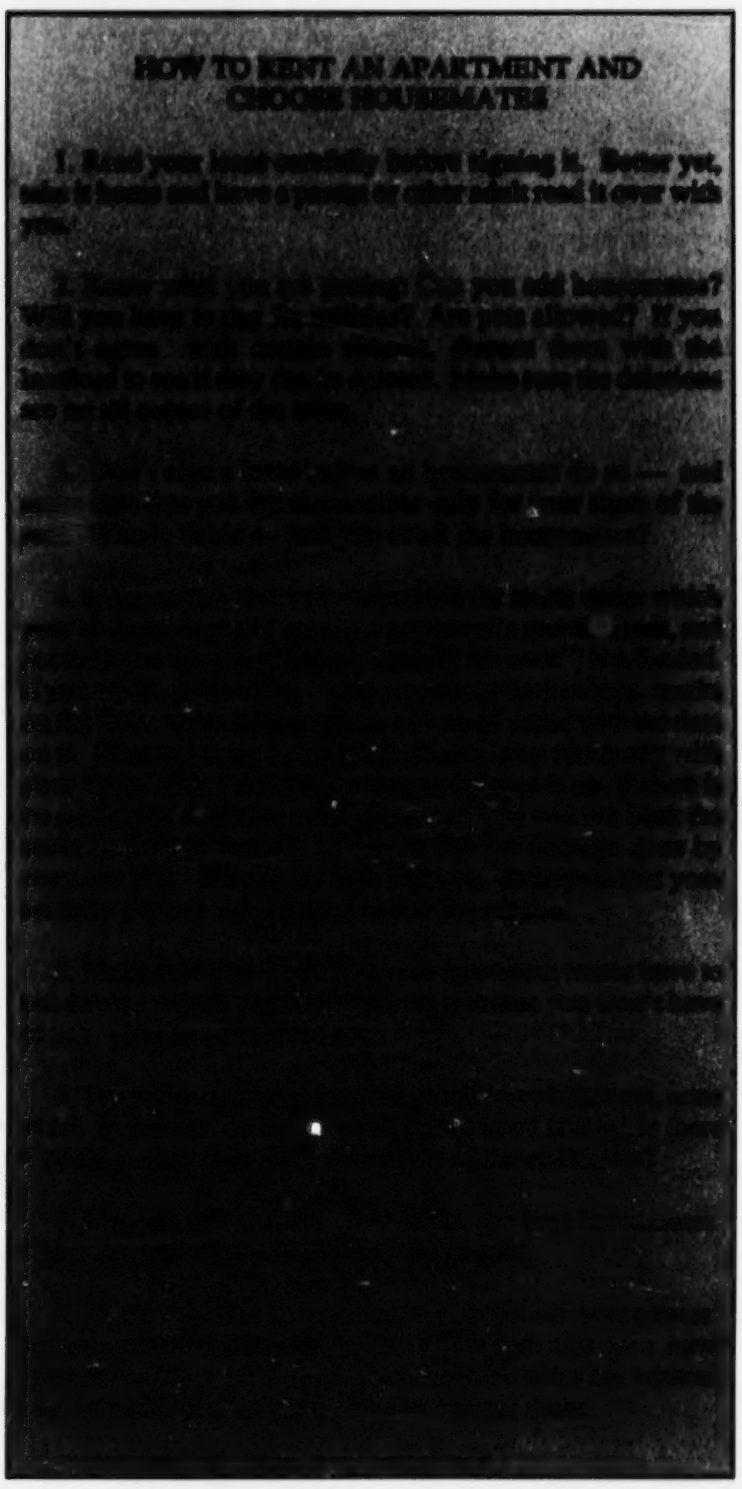
The Insider's Guide to Foreign Study lists hundreds of academic programs by country. Most, but not all, require a certain level of college work. Order for $12.95 from Addison Wesley (Reading, MA 01867).

ACADEMIC BURNOUT

Margie Ainslee lived with her mother in Tolland, Connecticut. She was accepted to Princeton, MIT and Cornell, but decided to pull in the reins before she rushed off to college. " When I was in high school," she said, "I worked real hard, cramming things into my schedule. I was just burned out. I knew that if I went right to college, I'd just hang out and go

"But," he said, "rent was more than we could afford even with two salaries. We found a suitable place with three bedrooms, and advertised for a third housemate." In the beginning, Doug found that most of his paycheck went towards apartment expenses.

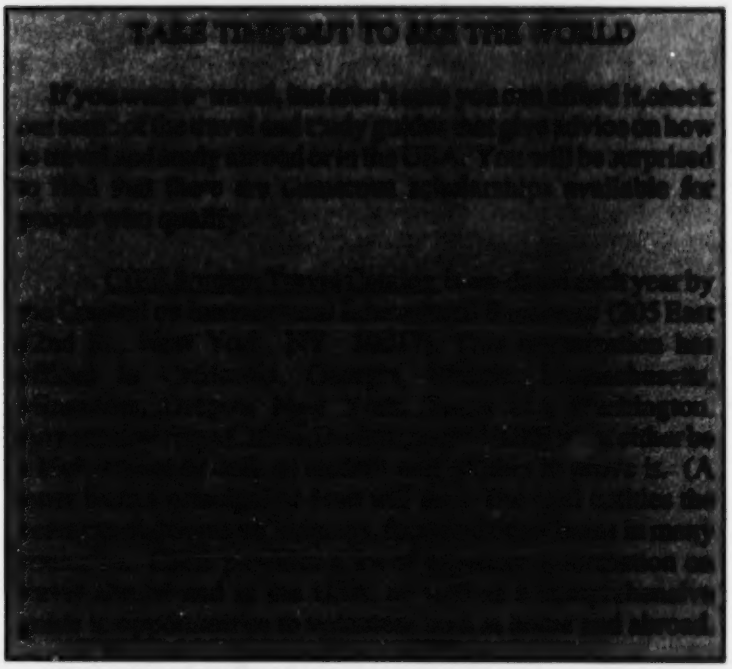
Fringe benefits are a major part of the compensation from established organizations. These include vacation, insurance, retirement, Social Security, etc. In 1987, for every dollar of salary, employers paid out around 35 cents in benefits.


HOW TO RENT AN APARTMENT AND CHOOSE HOUSEMATES

to parties."

Margie's father, who lives in Washington, DC, didn't want his daughter hanging around her hometown for a year. He worried that she would become lazy. He really wanted his daughter to attend his Alma Mater. So he offered Margie a present of a year to travel around the United States if she would agree to go to Princeton.

But Margie wanted to be free to decide how to spend this year herself and, later, to freely choose her college. "So I put Cornell on hold and deferred at Princeton. I didn't know if I could really do that — tell two universities to wait a year. (NOTE: Yes, you can, but you will lose your deposit at the college you decide not to attend.) But I did it anyway." By not turning down her father's choice of a college completely, Margie was letting him know that she appreciated his concern. By turning down his offer to support her during the year off, she was asserting her independence. "I was really pretty scared. I didn't think I had any skills, but someone offered me a job as a service technician in an electronics shop."



The Job Seeker: A Source Book for Youth in New York State tells what jobs are open to youth, salary information, how to job hunt, and kinds of skills needed for specific occupations. First copy is free from the New York State Department of Labor (Division of Research and Statistics, Harriman Office Building Campus, Albany, NY 12240).

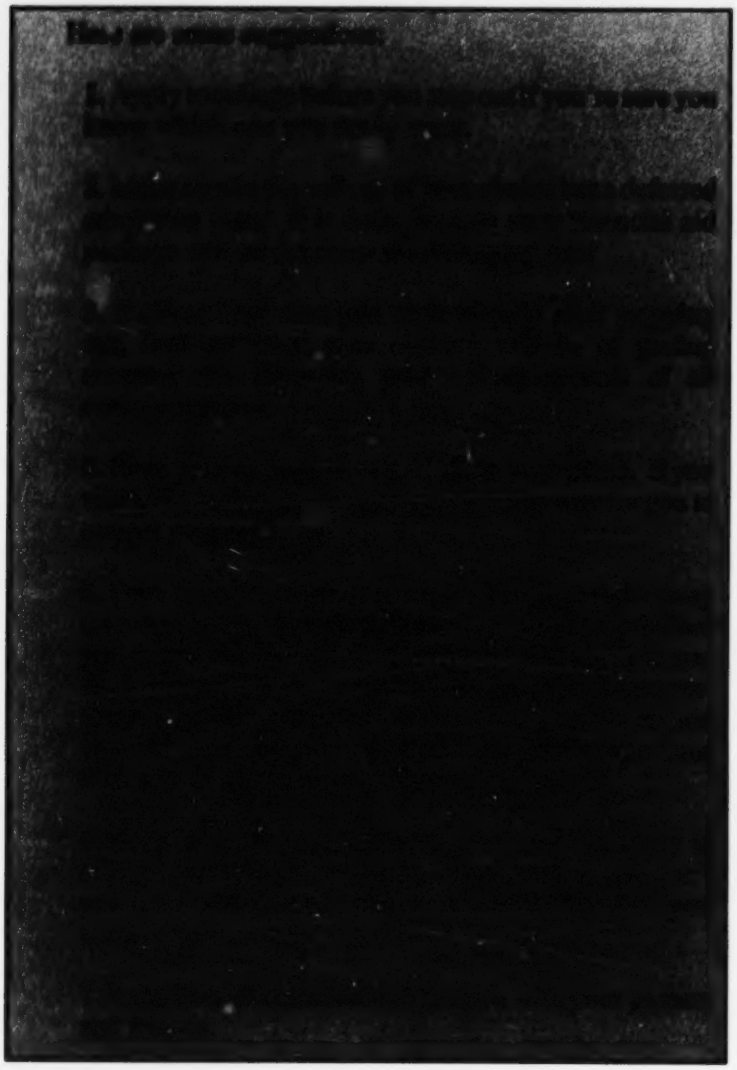
If there is one thing that these stories have in common, it is that regardless of what motivated these people to put their college education on hold, each displayed an independent spirit. And even though not all were successful in gaining parental approval for their decisions, they tried to keep the lines of communications open. Said Leana, "Now that I've taken the year off, my Dad talks it up with his friends who have college-bound kids." Gloria was never able to convince her father that her year away from Michigan was of value. "He thinks Dynamy was the end of me and this (New College of

the University of South Florida) was all a big mistake. He thinks I never should have left Michigan. Yet, he does agree that there were some things that were good for me that year."

HOW TO KEEP YOUR OPTIONS OPEN

If you decide on the stopout route, make sure you keep your options open. Even if college isn't a priority now, it may be in the future.

An interesting series of books on how to write admissions essays is sold by Mustang Publications (PO Box 9327, New Haven, CT 06533). The books are on law schools, business schools and on top colleges and sell for $8.95 each.



CHAPTER III

NO MORE PENCILS, NO MORE BOOKS: WORK AFTER SCHOOL

FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED

"Always have a plan and believe in it. Nothing good happens by accident."
Chuck Knox,
NFL Football coach

If you use time away from school to work, you can run into all kinds of problems you hadn't dreamed of. Leana remarked that "I'd never worked 40 hours a week before. It's a whole different world. School was fun. Work lasts from nine to five and that's not always fun."

Sometimes the job that sounds great doesn't work out well at all. The reasons for this may seem mysterious and frightening. As a first-time employee, you may not understand what's expected. Or, perhaps you hadn't carefully thought through what you really wanted from your time out.

Problems may arise in the workplace, in your living situation, in how you use your free time, or in how you handle your money. Check back to how you responded to some of the items in the self-assessment in Chapter I that have to do with short-term goals, ability to use leisure time, and ability to get along with people different from yourself. You may find that these are areas that are worth tracking even before difficulties arise. You probably won't solve all your problems, but at least you may have an understanding of why things can go wrong. And, as you read through this chapter and the next, you'll see how different people responded to problems. Perhaps the ways in which others develop coping strategies will work for you. In any case, just being aware of potential trouble spots can be an advantage.

MAKE A PLAN

You're probably tired of everyone telling you to make a plan, but do it anyway. In fact, make lots of plans—before you finish high school, if possible. And then be ready to scrap them or modify them as you gain new experience. Your plans don't have to be elaborate, but they do have to be more complex than, "I plan not to have anything to do with school for one entire year." You don't necessarily need a five-page, single-spaced typed set of objectives and goals. You can make one set of plans for what you would like to learn from a job. You can make a plan for how you intend to spend your earnings. Or you can make a plan for how you intend to spend your leisure time. The point is that the more thought you give to this time out, the more likely it will be that you will be satisfied with what you've done.

One of America's best known career columnists is Joyce Lain Kennedy whose Joyce Lain Kennedy's Career Book is a goldmine of useful information. Order for $14.95 plus $2.00 postage from the Garrett Park Press, PO Box 190B, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

A PLAN THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU: OPEN TO ADVENTURE

A Guide to Conservation Careers is distributed free by the National Association of Conservation Districts (PO Box 855, League City, TX 77573).

Philip Bereaud, of Ithaca, NY, deliberately didn't make a plan for the year after he graduated from high school. He thought that by making a plan he'd be too much like everybody else. At first he lived at his father's house until he found a job. It was the usual kind of first job that kids get in a college town: working as a dishwasher in a local restaurant. Next he found an apartment with some college students. " And then," he said, "I realized that my life was just as much a routine as when I was in school. It was just a different routine."

Philip's deliberate lack of plans wasn't working out. But recognizing that, Philip jumped at the chance to join a friend who was driving out to Oregon. Philip's real plan for the next two years grew out of his willingness to take chances and leave himself open to new ideas.

Once in Oregon, Philip attended the trial of social activists which included his traveling companion, Tim. The 13 were part of a group called the Cathedral Force Action Group and had been arrested when they tried to prevent a logging company from cutting down the old growth trees (called "Cathedral trees") in a national forest.

"There was such a range of people on trial, " Philip said. "Some were like Tim, who is a real hippie, and there were people who were clean shaven and in suits. There were those who looked really wise— a whole variety of people."

Thousands of service opportunities, both in this country and overseas, are listed in Invest Yourself which is available for $5.00 from the Commission on Voluntary Service and Action (PO Box 117, New York, NY 10009).

The trial made Philip think that if people were willing to risk jail for the sake of trees, there must be something to what they were doing. (Fortunately, none of the 13 was given a jail sentence. All were give probation.)

A PLAN EVOLVES

Philip decided to find out more. He decided to devote his time learning first hand about the problems we are facing in our environment. This, then, became his plan.

First he joined a group of people who called themselves "Earth First." With about two hundred other Earth Firsters, Philip helped set up camp in a woods in an effort to save a wilderness area called Oak Flat. Their goal was to draw attention to the problem of the diminishing national forests.

Philip explained, "This is our land, and unless the public knows what's happening to it, the balance between timber, wildlife, and recreation and research will be destroyed." The camp attracted a lot of media attention — something that environmentalists know is important to their cause.

When the camp closed, Philip signed up to harvest fir cones. Just as he was finishing this job, he learned that there were dangerous forest fires to the south. So he joined firefighters who were putting out the fires among smouldering stumps. "We had to dig up the stumps and grind out the fires for twelve hours a day."

Through these diverse experiences, Philip learned to get along with and understand the viewpoints of two completely different groups of people. When he was with the Earth First people, he was associating with those whose philosophy was to be at one with the earth, people who wanted to take as little from the earth as they could. When he was with the cone pickers and fire fighters, Philip worked with people who saw the woods as a place to make money.

Important in evaluating career fields is their long-range prospects. The railroad industry, for example, has declined from 4,000,000 employees in 1945 to 400,000 today.

"At first I couldn't understand how a person could look at a tree and see money. But I learned when I was cone picking to look at a tree and say, 'Well, five bushels of cones are in that tree. It's a $50 tree,' and that's the way loggers do it. They look at a tree and say, 'Oh, that tree is so many board feet.'"

A PLAN TO ESTABLISH HER INDEPENDENCE

When Rachel Reinitz was 14, her dad died. The oldest of three siblings from Geneva, New York, Rachel finished high school in three years. Her goals for stopping out were clear and simple. "I wanted to establish my independence and see if I could support myself if I needed to." She chose to do it in New York City. "I figured that if I could make it in New York City at 17, I wouldn't have to worry about making it anywhere."

When an offer came to work as an au pair, Rachel thought about it carefully. First she checked with Carnegie Mellon, where she'd been accepted with an excellent financial aid package. She was assured that her place would be held for her. Then she discussed her plans with her mother, who expressed surprise but supported her daughter's decision. Finally, Rachel and her mother met with her employer at the woman's home. It was in a wonderful old brownstone on Park Avenue.

"I had my own separate room with a shared bath. My quarters were once the 'maid's quarters'- small but private." Her work schedule was carefully spelled out in writing so that there would be few or no misunderstandings. She had weekends to herself, time off when the two children were in school, and several free evenings during the week. Her chores included tutoring the children, shopping, cooking for them, and light cleaning.

"I accomplished the main thing I set out to do, emotionally and mentally.

"I was completely independent—except for medical and dental bills. I loved living in New York. Even though my salary was not huge, I had enough money from my job to go to theater and to museums. My friends, who were in nearby colleges, would come to visit. I even had time to take a couple of courses at Hunter College— and it was there I discovered that I wanted to change my major from the humanities to engineering."

A PLAN TO TEST THE WATERS FOR A CAREER

Before Kelly Stone of Mamaronack, New York, graduated from high school, she knew two things: she wanted to start building a career and she didn't think she needed a college degree to do that. Certain that she wanted to work for a New York City publishing firm, she spent the first months of the summer preparing a resume and figuring out a strategy for landing that all important first job.

"The knowledge of the world is only to be easily acquired in the world, not in the closet."
Earl of Chesterfield

"I wasn't interested in continuing on to college. I knew that a job in publishing was just what I wanted." She targeted the middle of August as the right time to job hunt. "I literally walked the pavement every day. I went to different publishing houses with my resume, and I filled out dozens of applications. Usually I was interviewed on the spot because I was right there."

Because August is a slow time in publishing, people had the time to talk with Kelly. Two weeks later, she had two job offers. She chose a receptionist's job in a small division of Random House, and within six months went on to become an editorial assistant. Promotions came steadily for Kelly, and after two years she had gained experience in many phases of the business. "I'm the youngest person ever to be hired at Random House, and I'm often teased about that. I showed them that I was a serious person." Still in her teens, Kelly is now the assistant to the director of publicity in the trade department. This was a promotion she almost didn't get because she lacked a college degree. At first the director of the department didn't want to consider interviewing Kelly because everyone else in the department had at least a BA. However, Kelly's former boss ran interference for her and suggested that she at least be granted an interview. By the time Kelly had finished the interview, the job was hers.

NOT ALL PLANS WORK OUT IMMEDIATELY

Apprenticeship opportunities are listed in Construction Apprenticeships available from the Education Committee of the Associated General Contractors (1957 E Street NW, Washington, DC 20006).

Kiran had a definite plan, but it didn't get her close to her goal of raising the entire $5,500 to pay for her expedition to New Zealand. At summer's end she only had the $700 she earned at summer camp. "I had three and a half months before I was to leave. I needed nearly $5,000 and I needed a job. My friends were leaving for school, and I was an outsider. It was

the loneliest time I had in my whole life. I felt I'd lost something in common with all of my friends. And I thought, "Gosh, now I know what it's like to be in debt."

DEALING WITH REAL LIFE PROBLEMS
MAKING NEW FRIENDS

Many who stop out to work find that making new friends and keeping old ones can be a major problem. This is especially true if the job you take is in food service or another low-paying job. Chuck Burry started out as a dishwasher and eventually worked his way up to head cook at a restaurant in Syracuse, New York, before embarking on college.

"I had that problem at first. When you start out at the bottom of the totem pole it's difficult to make friends because there's a very high turnover rate. People don't want to make friends with someone who isn't going to be there for a long time. And it might come to the point where either you or your friend will get fired." This changes once you are in a relatively secure job, noted Chuck. "When I was a cook, I had close friendships with all of my coworkers. And I made a point of being really friendly to the dishwasher because I knew the kind of situation he was in."

"In 1976, 31 percent of new mothers were working within a year of giving birth. Today, 48 percent are working before their child's first birthday."
American Demographics, Vol. 8, No. 11

Leana commented that all of her good friends were away at college. During her year out she worried that she was missing out on something. And Rachel said, " The main difficulty I had was that I was lonely." Even with taking two classes at Hunter College, and her work with the children, she had to fight loneliness and boredom.

Doug thought that one of the worst things about the two years he stopped out was that "I didn't meet anyone. I made no friends of lasting quality. It was a lonely time. I'm a person who needed to work in a public place and be around people. I missed making friends. My old high school friends were making new friends while I was in a rut."

Not everyone experiences a lack of friends. Kelly, for example, has been able to make new friends at the workplace. And because she lives at home, she maintains close ties with family and relatives.

One obvious reason for Kelly's success in making new friends is that she knew from the beginning of her job hunt that she was looking for a career rather than just a job for a year before going on for a college degree. From the moment she began to work, she saw herself as a professional woman—and her coworkers, even though older than she, viewed her as a valuable employee who was there to stay.

Knowing that she had to raise her expedition money within

the next three months, Kiran didn't have to much time to feel sorry for herself. She accepted a job as a gardener on a work crew at the Governor's mansion— a job which was to test her ability to get along with people who were different from any she'd ever known before. The other women on Kiran's crew were all serving time in the women's prison, and were on released time during the day.

Over 300,000 people work for America's scheduled airlines. The Air Lines Employees Association (5600 S Central Avenue, Chicago, IL 60638) distributes a sheet listing typical jobs and list of major employers in the field.

"My supervisor, who was on parole, was white, as I am, and there was one other white prisoner who was in charge of the greenhouse. All the other women were black. It was an experience that changed me a lot.

"All my life I've made friends by being able to talk about the things I've done and the goals that I have. And these women were prisoners who didn't have families, who didn't have any of the advantages that I've had. They get to know you by working and watching each other work, and thus gain each other's respect."

Not surprisingly, Kiran quickly got on the nerves of her co-workers. They would see to it that she was dropped off at the farthest end of the garden and left to work by herself.

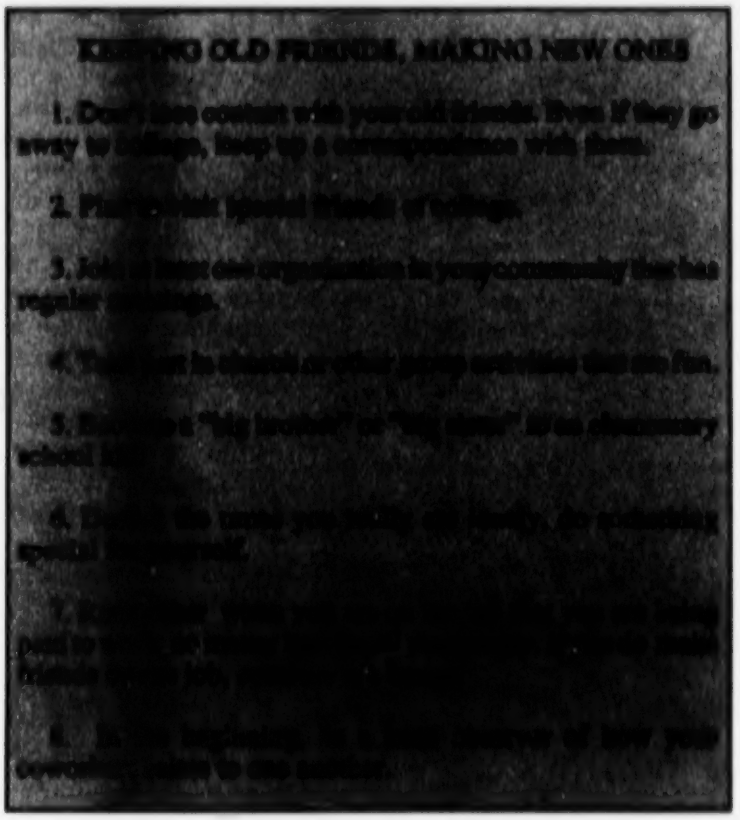
"At one point, we despised one another. But in the end, I made such close friends, that I still correspond with two women. One day, after a particularly bad morning, the supervisor sat me down and said, 'I cannot stand working with you. You are too cheerful, you are too optimistic, and I don't want to be around you!'"

Kiran was stunned. Then the other woman spilled out the story of her life. It made Kiran weep, but then she told her supervisor about her life. "All I wanted to do, " she told the woman, "was to get to know all of you." And to her amazement, the woman hugged her and said, "O.K., then we'll do it together."

What Color is Your Parachute? by Richard Bolles is the most popular career guidance book ever published. It is available for $9.95 from Ten Speed Press (PO Box 7123, Berkeley, CA 94707).

That was the turning point for Kiran. She gained acceptance and respect from coworkers who were very different from her. And she was able to return their respect. "I'll never look at the gardeners on the grounds of the state buildings and Governor's mansion again without remembering."

Kiran discovered that it was important not to prejudge her coworkers. She found a way to appreciate people she worked with. Sometimes that is far more valuable than the actual job, itself. Doug, for example, came away from his first working experience with great respect for his coworkers. "I worked with some people whose whole working life would be spent in the back of a restaurant. These are important people in my community — and most of us never even think about them in our daily lives."



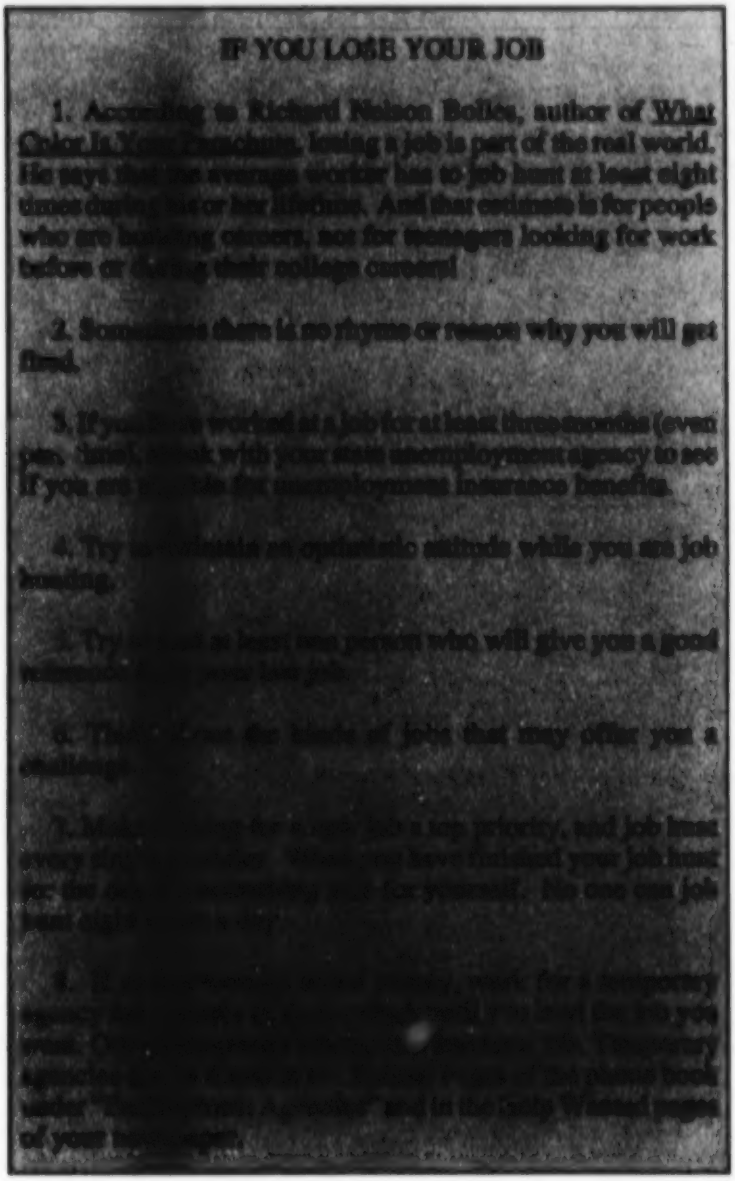
"Labor disgraces no man; unfortunately, you occasionally find men disgrace labor."
Ulysses S. Grant

GETTING FIRED — WHEN TO QUIT

Lots of people get fired or laid off from their jobs. Anyone who has shown up for work on Friday only to be told it will be his or her last day, goes home depressed. Even when the boss assures you it isn't your fault, or even when you didn't like the job in the first place, getting fired is a downer. The trick is to leave the workplace quickly (after picking up your last pay check). The last thing in the world you need is to have your coworkers see you in your shaken state.

You may not want to tell your parents or your friends that you lost your job. But actually, you will feel better almost immediately if you do. For one thing, virtually anyone who has worked has had the same experience. By discussing your situation with people close to you, you will soon realize that getting fired is simply a glitch in your plans. It's not the end of the world, and it doesn't mean you're a bad person. It does mean, however, that you will have to look for a new job. And it may mean that you will want to rethink your career goals if you don't want to end up in a bad situation again.

A directory listing the 105 Job Corps centers and the areas in which they offer courses is available from the Director, Job Corps. ETA, US Dept. of Labor, Washington, DC 20210



IF YOU LOSE YOUR JOB

1. According to Richard Nelson Bolles, author of What Color Is Your Parachute, losing a job is part of the real world. He says that the average worker has to job hunt at least eight times during his or her lifetime. And that estimate is for people who are building careers, not for teenagers looking for work before or during their college careers!

2. Sometimes there is no rhyme or reason why you will get fired.

3. If you have worked at a job for at least three months (even part-time), check with your state unemployment agency to see if you are eligible for unemployment insurance benefits.

4. Try to maintain an optimistic attitude while you are job hunting.

5. Try to get at least one person who will give you a good reference for your next job.

6. Think about the kinds of jobs that may offer you a challenge.

7. Make looking for a good job a top priority, and job hunt every day. Remember, you have full-time job hunt for the next few months. Work for yourself. No one can job hunt as hard as you can.

8. Be prepared to accept a temporary job. Many times you can turn a temporary job into a permanent one. Temporary jobs can also help you get experience and references. Check the Yellow Pages under "Employment Agencies" and in the help Wanted pages of your local newspaper.

BACK ON THE STREET

Shortly after he started working as a dishwasher at a local restaurant, Doug was fired. "That was a hard thing," he said. At 16 finding a job hadn't been easy, and working made him feel great. "I wasn't fired for being inefficient or indifferent. I was fired because the manager had overhired." It was a blow to Doug's self-esteem. Nevertheless, he learned that even a little experience was enough to land him a job in a better restaurant. A few months later, however, he realized that this wasn't where he wanted to be. But Doug also learned that he couldn't just walk away from a job because he'd had a bad day.

"There was one moment that I recall as a striking means of

growing up. It was a hard day, and I was exhausted. I was angry at the boss and the people I was working with. I wanted to quit. Suddenly I realized that if I quit, I wouldn't eat. I probably could have gotten money from my parents. But I knew I didn't want to do that. I couldn't quit for my own peace of mind.

"That was a specific moment in my life , and it was a very powerful experience."

"Life is an exciting business and most exciting when it is lived for others."
Helen Keller

Eventually, Doug landed a more satisfying job as a mechanic in the bicycle shop where he had bought all of his bike equipment since he was a kid. He was able to convince the owner to hire him because he showed him that he could hold down a job—even one he didn't especially like. He kept the job at the bicycle shop until he went off to college— and then got hired back during summer breaks.

Leana also got fired from her first job as a bagger in a super market. "Even when it's a job that you don't especially like, you are hurt when the boss fires you," she said. But that experience made her realize that it was important to look for work that offered a challenge. She reviewed her reasons for stopping out, and used her knowledge of Japanese to land a job in a Buddhist publishing firm in a nearby town. "I did everything— running accounts, bookkeeping and shipping. I loved being around the books, and got along well with the woman I was working for, and even though I only got minimum wages, it was an excellent experience."

CHAPTER IV

AM I HAVING FUN YET? NUTS AND BOLTS OF MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TIME OUT

The Temp Workers Handbook presents essays by a number of people who took short-term jobs. Order for $12.95 from AMACON, (135 W 50th Street, New York, NY 10020.)

WHOSE MONEY IS IT ANYWAY?

O.K., you've got that job. It looks as if things are really going according to plan. Gosh, though, the paycheck is smaller than you though it was going to be. How come? Well, along with your proof of citizenship, you had to fill out one of those Federal Government W-4 forms, right?

Lesson 1: the money you'll earn over your lifetime really isn't all yours. The Feds take out taxes, unemployment insurance and social security; in most states there is an additional smaller amount removed for state taxes— and what's left is all yours. Well, not quite. You may find yourself with some fixed expenses. If you live at home, you might be contributing something to household expenses on a monthly basis. That's something you really must discuss with your parents. The more open you are with them in the beginning, the fewer misunderstandings will occur later on.

"Few ever die from overwork, but many quietly curl up and die because of undersatisfaction."
Sydney Harris

Neither Kiran nor Leana was asked to contribute any part of her earnings while she lived at home. This was because each of their families agreed that their goals for their earnings were basically for educational purposes. Yet they often contributed to family life in ways which didn't involve money. Both pitched in with household chores, and Leana spent a lot of her free time with her younger half-brother and sister. Kelly, on the other hand, sees herself building a career and making life-choices and, regularly contributes to the family budget. "I can't afford the kind of apartment I'd like on my salary," she said. And living on her own is not a high priority.

Margie, who got a job in an electronics firm, lived with her mother for several months before she found people with whom to share an apartment. By mutual agreement she wasn't charged any rent during that time at home. But she did put in her own phone line and was responsible for the bill each month.

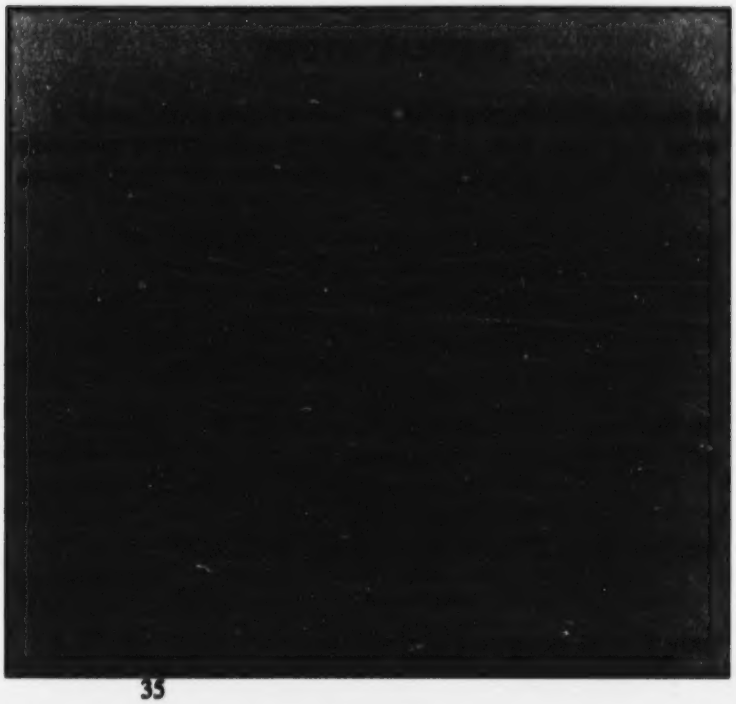
Doug also lived at home, rent-free, for three months until he'd saved some money. He always intended to test his independence to the fullest, so he and a friend decided to share an apartment.

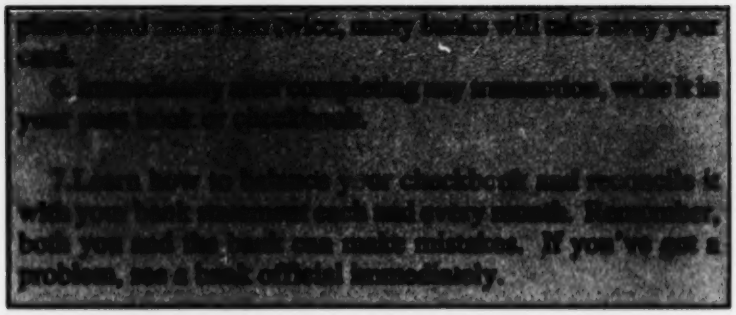
HANDLING YOUR MONEY

Fortunately, unless you've grossly miscalculated, you will have some money left from each paycheck to do with as you like. Regardless of what your plans are for that money, you will probably want to open up a savings account and perhaps a checking account as well.

If you are under 18, you'll be surprised to learn that while all banks will be happy to let you put money into a savings account, not all of them will let you open a checking account. Said one bank manager, "Checking accounts can be a liability. Most young people don't know the basics of balancing a checkbook." Still, if you have a job, act like a serious person, and can demonstrate your need for a checking account, you can usually find a bank that will let you have one.

Don't get too easily discouraged if job hunting takes time. A top job search expert estimates that you may get as many as 19 "no's" before the first "yes" or "maybe" from an employer.





TIME ON YOUR HANDS AND NOT MUCH MONEY

What do people do when they're not sleeping, working or eating? When you were a student, finding things to do with your leisure time wasn't difficult. If you weren't studying, you were hanging out with friends, partying, getting involved in such school activities as sports, drama clubs, orchestra, band—well, there were so many things to do, you probably never had to even think about free time: there wasn't any.

Careering and Re-Careering for the 1990's: The Complete Guide to Planning Your Future tells how to locate jobs and to best communicate your qualifications. Order for $14.95 from the Garrett Park Press, PO Box 190B, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

Now that you are a working person, however, there's no one to tell you what to do after work. You can come home from your job, check out the refrigerator, turn on the TV and watch it for as long as you want. If you do this every day, you will, as Chuck noted, "become totally lethargic. You'll lose sight of why you really wanted to take time out."

The trouble is that you may no longer have a ready-made community of like-minded people to do things with; you don't have lots of bucks to spend on entertainment; and, most of all, you will not feel as if you're ready to join into all of those sober, adult activities your parents do. So what kinds of things can you do? What is it that young working people do with their time?

Doug said, "At first I watched lots of TV. After a while I began to feel awful—my mind felt like it was turning to mush. So I made sure to buy the newspaper every single day. Not only did it keep me in touch with what was going on in the world, but the local paper kept me abreast of day-to-day events in my hometown. And I discovered there were so many things going on, that if I wanted to, I could find something to do almost every night. And lots of the things were free."

Today, there are more students who attend school part-time than go full-time. Most of those who go part-time hold a paying job.

As it turned out, just reading the newspaper wasn't enough intellectual stimulation for Doug. (Most newspapers are written for a reading level of sixth grade.) "I began to realize that I really didn't know very much about world events, so I'd follow some aspect of current events in the paper for a while, and then I'd call up my high school social studies teacher and ask her to recommend some books for me to read." Eventually, Doug got so interested in American politics, that he audited a course at his local college.

AUDITING COLLEGE CLASSES AND OTHER WAYS TO LEARN

Many colleges and universities will allow you to audit courses for very little money. Of course you will not get the full benefit of your professor's teaching, since there are restrictions on what an auditor can and cannot do. How much attention you will get will be up to the professor. Usually, but not always, papers you write won't receive the teacher's written criticism. You may take tests, but not receive a grade, and you won't receive credit for the course. Yet, since there is no pressure to work for a grade, you are free to set your own limits on how much you wish to learn. You will really be in charge of your own education.

One method of taking college and other courses is by correspondence. The National Home Study Council (1601 18th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009) distributes a free list of schools accredited to offer courses.

But reading isn't all you might be doing with your free time. So go back and check out that plan you made for use of leisure time.

Margie always had a yen to try acting, but never had time for an acting course in high school. What better time to try it then now?

" I didn't really want to perform in front of an audience, I just wanted to see what acting was all about. So I signed up for an acting course given by a local theater group. And I had a fabulous time." In fact, after she finished the course, Margie volunteered her services to do some of the necessary back-stage chores. " I loved being with the theater people— and I got to see all of their productions free."

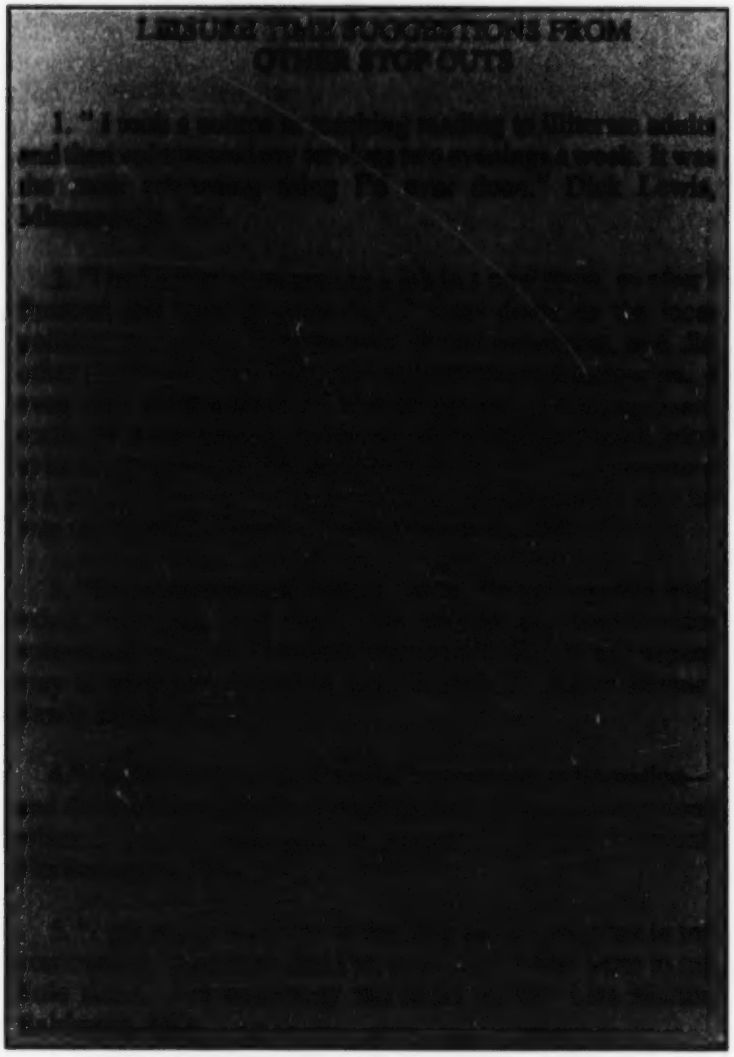
Chuck, who is six feet four inches, joined a city-wide basketball league, and when basketball season was over, switched to baseball. " After working in a kitchen all day, it really was great to do something physical— and I got to meet some swell people."

Leana decided to expand her interest in Japanese culture. But since she worked with the books all day long, she joined a martial arts class in karate. "The day I actually broke a board with my bare hand was so exciting." she said. "I learned so much about how to control my own body. I never knew what it was like to feel so strong "

And Rachel, who in addition to taking a class at Hunter College, decided she'd always wanted to know how to scuba dive. "I have no idea when I'll ever get to use this skill, but it's important for me to overcome obstacles— and I felt that exploring the world that is under water in a wet suit with a tank strapped to my back had to be a major accomplishment." Even though the course was costly, Rachel felt it was a worthwhile expenditure.

The point is that there is an awful lot of great things to do after working hours—if you look for them. The most difficult part of sampling new activities is that often you won't have friends to go with you. "That's the advantage of signing up for a class." said Margie. " You don't have to go with anyone because you're doing it for yourself."

"Snow and adolescence are the only two problems that disappear if you ignore them long enough."
Earl Wilson



Pathways to Work provides guidance on how to enter the world of work, using a workbook format. Order for $9.95 from Meridan Education Corporation (236 E Front Street, Bloomington,IL 61701).

USING LEISURE TIME TO FINANCE HER ADVENTURES

Kiran had absolutely no free time once she came home from her gardener's job at the Governor's mansion. "I'd come home from working a 10-hour day, bathe, and get dressed in appropriate clothes so that I could go out and speak to various business people in the comminity. You see, I was supposed to raise part of this $5,500 for Operation Raleigh by getting business people to sponsor me. They, in turn, would be able to take a tax deduction because of the nature of the program. We also did a bike-a-thon, in which people pledged so much

per mile. And I was able to organize dozens of people to participate. I also did little walk-a-thons." By the time Kiran was ready to leave for New Zealand, she'd successfully raised over $5,000 through donations. And she was able to use her own earnings to purchase her travel gear and for spending money.

"Keep your mind active. Make yourself read and debate the issues. If you aren't going to do that, you'll have trouble when you get into college."

Susan P. Staggers, Director of Admissions, Mount Holyoke College

PUTTING MONEY ASIDE

Having a goal in mind is one way to force yourself to save money. Your project may not be as ambitious as Kiran's. But Chuck, for example, decided that he really wanted to travel before he returned to school. " I never did earn a great deal of money, " he said. "Even though I stopped out of school for nearly four years, the most I ever earned in one year was around $8,500— and that was when I was a head cook. Still, once I decided that I wanted to see Europe with my girl friend, I was able to sock away plenty of money. And it turned out to be the most educational thing I'd done. It was at least as educational as a full semester in college. I learned about other cultures, we saw great works of art, some of the masterpieces of architecture— we'd put a lot of time into planning our trip, and even when things didn't work out as planned, we still had a terrific time."

KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR MONEY

If you don't make a budget, your money will be gone in no time. It isn't difficult to make one, it is harder to stick to it. Before you move out of your family home, you will have to decide on the following expenditures:

"A lot of what you do with your time depends upon where you are located. If you are in an urban setting, there are many cultural events available. On the other hand, you can also learn a lot if you're working in the forest service out in Idaho. The main thing I'd say is just don't stop reading. Reading is the whole process of communication. Keep in touch with the world."

Richard Pierson, Dean of Admissions, Clark University

HOUSING: How much you pay for housing, a room or an apartment will vary from place to place. To get a realistic idea of what apartments cost, read your local newspaper. Become familiar with various locations in your city, to save yourself time and effort in looking at places which are safe and convenient. The old rule-of-thumb used to be1/4 of your monthly income before taxes should cover your rent. Today, this may be too low an estimate. In some parts of the country, housing may take half of your monthly paycheck.

One way to cut housing cost is to share an apartment with one or more people. Check in your local paper under Apartmentmate or Housemate Wanted.

FOOD: Again, this expense varies from place-to-place, season-to-season, one's appetite, and how many times you get invited out to a free dinner. Between $75-100 per month is probably a moderate range. But you will also need to shell out cash for snacks, lunches at work, and an occasional dinner out, plus that inevitable late-night pizza! Paying for all of your own meals is a lot different from when you lived and ate at home.

TIP: Buy a good cookbook and learn to make things from 'scratch'— and make enough for lots of left-overs and for the freezer.

TIP: Bring lunch and snacks to work from home. Expensive lunches out could totally ruin your budget— and your waistline.

It is often hard to know whether nontraditional schools, many of which offer study courses by mail, are legitimate or not. A good source of reliable information is Bear's Guide to Earning Non-Traditional College Degrees available for $11.95 from the Ten Speed Press (PO Box 7123, Berkeley, CA 94707).

TRANSPORTATION: Is your job within walking distance of your home? Can you use a bike to get around town? Is public transportation readily available? Necessary travel can be expensive, so figure it in your monthly budget.

RECREATION: Will you be able to afford a movie once or twice a month? Do you have to pay for cable TV ? Do you or one of your housemates have a VCR so you can rent videos and share the cost? Are there plays and concerts you want to go to? Once you know how much you can budget each month for recreation, you may be very happy to just get together with friends or invite them over to your place. (Have them bring the snacks!) Other things you might consider:

a. membership to local 'Y's' or health clubs,

b. discount tickets to plays,

c. find out if you can usher at special sporting events or concerts in exchange for a free ticket,

d. keep a 'wish-list' handy when family and friends ask what you want for your birthday and other gift-giving occasions.

WEEKENDS: Use weekends to get together with friends to bike or hike or back-pack. Share transportation costs when traveling by car.

PERSONAL ITEMS: When you lived at home, many personal items were provided for you. Now you'll be responsible for the little things like toilet paper, tooth brushes and laundry. And bigger items like that bargain sweater you spotted in the department store. And you, too, will have to keep track of birthdays and other gift-giving occasions of friends and relatives. You are also responsible for your own phone bill. You can probably count on most of the clothes with which you can began a stop out experience taking care of your immediate needs. But, don't forget that over the long haul, clothing must be replaced annually.

Health insurance and money for dental bills and the like can be a big drain on people. You might just be lucky and get coverage as a part of a job which you take. The point is keep this potential expense in mind.

FINAL THOUGHTS: You need to note which things will be 'one-time' cost, and which are on-going. (Example: the phone company may require a substantial deposit if you are a first-time customer. They will refund that deposit after a time— but you should keep careful records.).

Didn't you want to save some money? Remember to open that bank account—and make certain there isn't a penalty if you dip below a certain balance. If, when you add up your proposed monthly expenses, they exceed your current income, you may need to rethink your plans for living away from home, at least for the first several months. Discuss this with your family. Or, perhaps you'll look for a better-paying job.

What seems to be the consensus among those who are spending their time working is that there's lots more to life than earning money— even when the job is satisfying. Perhaps even more than the job itself is the feeling of being in charge of your life for the very first time. You've got no one looking over your shoulder, no one telling you about deadlines for papers, no test to take— and if you're not living at home, what time you come in is totally up to you. That also means that any mistakes you make are going to be yours and yours alone. Yet every person who was interviewed for this book felt terrific about what they'd done and what they'd accomplished.

"The art of life lies in a constant readjustment to our surroundings."
Kakuzo Okakura

WAS IT WORTH IT?

"My work experience made me ready to try different kinds of things. I never thought I'd enjoy working in an office. But I liked dealing with customers." — Leana Horowitz

"I became so much more independent. I was not as intimidated by new situations. When I got to college, I had less trouble adjusting than many of my classmates. And I have a lot more of an appreciation for school." — Rachel Reinitz

"In the long run, stopping out didn't make things better, but I learned not to worry so much." — Margie Ainslee

"At the time I stopped out, I found that work was more fulfilling than school. I couldn't figure out what I would study, so I thought school would be a waste. Working and living on my own was the best thing I could have done." — Chuck Burry

"College is a safe place. The real world is all about getting your next meal. My experience during the two years I stopped out taught me that I can get even a menial job and be satisfied. My friends who are students think school is hard. They see that when you're working, you have money. Well, I can tell you, it was hard to get." — Doug Leonard

CHECKLIST FOR MAKING A MONTHLY BUDGET

Unless you are a person who really loves little boxes and lots of numbers, making a monthly budget can really be a pretty boring thing to do. It's probably a good idea to keep your consumer desires to a minimum and don't get sucked into buying things on credit. Figure that you've got plenty of time to develop more expensive tastes — and wait until you have the money to indulge them. These are the major things to keep on top of:

1. Your monthly income and the dates you get paid.
2. Date the rent is due.
3. Date the gas and electric is due.
4. Last day to pay the phone bill.
5. Monthly cable bill for the t.v.
6. Weekly food costs.
7. Adding to your wardrobe.
8. Adding to your record or book collection.
9. Necessary items to keep your living space in order.
10. Special events you want to go to.
11. Unexpected expenses.

"Life is but an endless series of experiments."
Mahatma Gandhi

Keep your checklist in a prominent place — taped to the wall above your desk, or on the refrigerator. Keep track of your expenses for a couple of months, and if you seem to always be broke at the end of the month, take stock of where you can cut back. If you're down to the bare bones, and not enjoying yourself, it's probably a good idea to look for a better paying job, a less expensive living space, or add another apartmentmate.

CHAPTER V

INTERNSHIPS: UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITIES, UNIQUE EXPERIENCES

Working at an entry-level job may not be quite what you had in mind when you decided to stop out. Perhaps you want a unique experience, one which will give you a broader understanding of a field that interests you enough to consider a career in it. Or perhaps you are looking for a wide variety of experiences because you haven't a clue as to what you want to do with your life. An internship might be just the ticket. What is an internship anyway ? Is it just a lot of volunteer work? Is an internship really different from a regular job?

Internships lists over 38,000 opportunities for college students and adults. Order for $21.95 from the Garrett Park Press, (PO Box 190B, Garrett Park, MD 20896).

According to the National Society for Internships and Experiential Education, what makes an internship different from either serving as a volunteer or working on a job (and far more interesting) are three things. First, there is a partnership between the sponsor and the intern. Next, there is a built-in intentional learning agenda for the intern. Finally, the intern goes through a continuous process of reflection so that he or she can begin to understand the theory and actual practice during and after the experience. It is that careful mix of the intentional learning goal and periodic reflection on what the intern is experiencing that is essential to a successful internship.

Jane G. Kendall, the Executive Director of the National Society for Internships and Experiental Education, notes these options for internships:

- Part-time or full-time
- One month to two years
- Paid or unpaid
- Sponsored through an educational institution or arranged independently by a learner or host organization
- Evaluated for academic credit or not credited
- For learners from high school age through senior citizens
- For a variety of goals such as academic, ethical, citizenship, career, personal/social development.

She notes these special advantages from an internship experience:

According to the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps, there are over 60 states and community service groups which offer full-time service opportunities to some 60,000 young people each year.

- Acquire, apply, integrate and evaluate a body of knowledge or the methodology of an academic discipline
- Understand different cultures and environments
- Acquire generic academic skills, e.g. stating a problem, analysis, synthesis

Develop and use an ethical perspective in complex situations

Develop knowledge and skills specific to a particular occupation, profession or organizational setting

Acquire generic skills for effective adult life, e.g. oral communication, interpersonal interaction, coping with ambiguity, working in groups, setting goals, managing time

Explore career options and gain documented work experience in a field that requires college-level knowledge and skills.

The National Directory of Internships describes a number of opportunities and is available for $16.00 from the National Society for Internships and Experiential Education (122 St. Mary's Street, Raleigh, NC 27605).

So how does a person actually set up an internship with an agency or a business? And how does the internship actually work? How do you make certain that you are getting the most out of the experience?

Before you begin to research internships, you ought to be aware that very few offer paid positions. In some instances there is a fee charged by the sponsoring organization to take part in the internship. The reasons for this become obvious once you discover how much work a sponsor must do in order to make the internship a successful and worthwhile experience for the participants.

LOCATING INTERNSHIPS

There are a number of ways to learn about existing internships or how to create one for yourself. Start with the easiest way first, and if that doesn't bear fruit, try another approach.

The Experienced Hand: A Student Manual for Making the Most of an Internship offers specific advice for the internship period. Order for $6.95 from the Carroll Press, (43 Squantum Street, Cranston, RI 02920.)

Your first stop ought to be your school guidance counselor; be sure to explain your purpose. A guidance counselor receives many informational packets from internship programs that have a proven track record. He or she may simply hand you a file folder. Hopefully, however, your counselor may have knowledge about certain programs, can discuss them with you in depth, and help you decide which ones are worth an application. Your counselor can advise you on how to fill out an application so that it highlights your qualifications. And, he or she may know of other students who have been accepted into internship programs so you may contact them for an eye-witness account of what to expect.

If you don't have any luck with your guidance office, check your public library for the directories of internships listed throughout this chapter. Keep in mind that the largest number of internships are set aside for college and graduate students. Read the directories carefully to make sure the sponsors of the internships which interest you accept high school students or high school graduates not presently enrolled in a college. Check out several directories, and think about areas you are

Residents of the Greater New York Area are eligible to train as police cadets, combining summer training with part-time work while completing college. Cadets receive up to $10,500 in paid work, a college stipend and a loan of $3,000. The loan is forgiven for those who later serve for two years as a police officer.

interested in pursuing: business, public agencies, museums, science, the arts. Check off those that seem like possibilities and then write for information. If you decide to apply, make sure you know filing deadlines, whether or not there are fees involved, if there are scholarships available, etc. And make sure to get your application in on time.

A third party possibility is to read magazines and other publications that are specific to your interest. For example, people who are interested in theater or dance read the magazine Art Search, which lists internships in those fields throughout the year.

Finally, if you know the kind of experience you are looking for, make a direct approach to an executive in a business firm or an agency, explain your goals, and see if you can work out a reasonable plan for an internship. And if you know someone who can open doors for you, don't be afraid to make use of that contact. Once you've been taken on, it will be up to you to prove yourself.

A VARIED EXPERIENCE

Back in Chapter II, you met Gloria Shepard. She said that she didn't really know what she wanted to do after high school graduation, but she wanted to do something special. She elected to take part in a yearlong educational internship program organized or administered by Dynamy, Incorporated.

Dynamy, Inc. may be contacted at 57 Cedar Street, Worcester, MA 01609 (Telephone: 508-755-2571).

Despite parental misgivings, Gloria left everything she knew in her home state of Michigan and arrived in Worcester, Massachusetts, one autumn afternoon to begin her adventure. At Dynamy's headquarters she met about 40 other recent high school graduates with whom she would share her next year. In addition to the interns, there were Dynamy advisors who would help her settle in and offer support and planning strategies throughout the year.

Tony Buccelli, who is the current executive director of this unique program, says "We believe very strongly that this is more difficult period than a college freshman year. We ask people to do things that 18 and 19 year olds don't often get asked to do. We ask young people who have just graduated from high school to behave in adult ways."

The Dynamy program is broken down into different phases, beginning with a three-week Outward Bound segment that takes place in the north country of Maine. This immediately gets everyone acquainted with one another in a very special way.

For Gloria, the Outward Bound program had a powerful impact . In carefully designed stages, the 40 interns learned

how to scale a 50-foot wall, jump 70 feet from a ledge onto a tree stump, and do many things they never believed they were capable of doing- - and they learned the importance of working together.

"It is such a confidence-inspiring experience." Gloria said. And as a result of it, she decided that, "nature was pretty important to me." When she enrolled in New College in Florida the following year, she knew that she would major in environmental studies.

When the group returned to Worcester, Gloria was amazed to find she had a choice of over 250 internships in almost (but not quite) any area she could want. She would have time to take part in four of them, since each lasted approximately ten weeks.

Once Gloria made her choice, she and her advisor met with the sponsor. She first worked for a state senator whose home base was Worcester. Later she would choose to intern in a child development center, the Audubon Society, and Worcester Magazine.

The National Directory of Art Internships list about 2,000 opportunities with 850 host organizations. Order for $30.00 from the National Network for Arts Placement (935 West Avenue 37, Los Angeles, CA 90065).

Dynamy interns are encouraged to take part in a variety of experiences over the year so that they can learn what it is like in the private business sector, nonprofit organizations and human services.

"What we want to do," said Director Buccelli, " is to get our young people to see that nonprofit organizations depend upon the private sector, and that the private sector of any city benefits from nonprofit organizations because such advantages as excellent educational facilities, theater and dance companies— these things will attract attract employees to a place and enhance the quality of life."

LEARNING TO ASSERT HERSELF

How did all this work out for Gloria? That first internship was valuable for a number of reasons.

"At first it was pretty boring work, " she said. All she was doing was putting names and addresses into a computer. Then she realized that unless she spoke up and took some initiative, she wasn't going to get very much out of the next nine or ten weeks.

"I am a great believer in luck and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it."
Stephen Leacock,
Canadian Humorist

She first shared her concerns with her Dynamy advisor. Next she spoke with her sponsor. Almost immediately, things got better. Gloria was given some real responsibilities. "I kept a file of clippings on issues which interested the senator. I organized a program for representives of 25 state agencies to meet with some of the senator's really poor constituents so

they'd know how to utilize these agencies. That meant that I sent out letters to both the agencies providing services, and the people who could use them; called people on the phone, and went door-to-door to let constituents know we were seriously interested in their participation."

Ideas for summer work and other activities are presented in Peterson's Summer Opportunities for Kids and Teenagers available for $20.70 from Peterson's Guides, PO Box 2123, Princeton, NJ 08543.

The payoff was that while Gloria had put together a very valuable program for the state senator's constituents, she learned important organizing skills. Additionally, she gained an understanding of the issues affecting the area in which she was living.

Gloria's self-confidence grew during those weeks in the senator's office. "I learned how to say no, and I learned when they have a right to ask you to do things."

After Gloria had completed two other internships, she decided she wanted to work on a newspaper or magazine. However, she discovered that with 10 colleges and universities in Worcester, these internships were always saved for college students.

"I wanted to work for a newspaper because I'm interested in journalism."she said, "but it was difficult to get a journalism internship. But some of the Dynamy staff knew the editor at Worcester Magazine, and I went to see him. I told him how much I wanted to be there and I said I'd work hard, and I said, 'please.' I also brought along some things I'd written."

After two more interviews, the editor finally agreed to try Gloria. "And," she said, "it worked out really well. I ended up getting four or five articles published."

For the Working Artist tells how those interested in acting, music, writing, art and dance can help themselves to survive in the real world. Costs $25.00 from the National Network for Artist Placement (935 West Avenue 37, Los Angeles, CA 90065).

Mr. Buccelli was delighted with Gloria's internship at the magazine. "Interning with a magazine or newspaper is one of the most popular things going these days, and editors have a wide choice of qualified interns. So Gloria's internship was a real feather in her cap." And from Dynamy's point of view, "the high quality of Gloria's work at the magazine benefited our program. The magazine is now willing to try other interns from Dynamy.

"What our interns learn is that the success of the internship is important not only from the intern's point-of-view, but from our point-of-view, also,"continued Buccelli. "There are over 200 agencies in the city of Worcester without which this program could not operate. If the sponsors get angry at us because an intern doesn't do his or her job, we wouldn't have a program."

LEARNING ABOUT THE WORLD OF DANCE THEATER

Kate Churchill chose a technical theater internship at Jacob's Pillow, a world-renowned dance festival in western Massachusetts, when she was 15. It was the first year Jacob's Pillow permitted high school students to intern. "I was called a junior apprentice." she said. "Yet I was treated exactly the same as all of the other people there. In the beginning I was doing things like pulling the curtain, but by the end of the summer I was running the light and sound boards. The year I was there, I was one of two high school kids. Most of the people were 18 years and older."

David Wertheimer, interned there that summer, too, right after he graduated high school. He found out about Jacob's Pillow through Art Search Magazine.

"It was a fantastic summer. I was working with the dance companies who came there to perform. We could set up lights for them. We (the interns) also were in charge of running special dance performances called 'Inside Out' which took place outdoors before scheduled programs. We also learned to do some video work and attended to general maintenance around the theater, and we got some experience in house management—and that's a pretty good view of all aspects of the theater."

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival may be contacted via PO Box 287, Lee, MA, 01238. (Telephone 413-637-1322). Its application deadline is March 15.

Norton Owen, director of education programs at Jacob's Pillow, says that each year since the internship program began back in 1983, it has been adjusted and improved upon. "We have an evaluation process, and interns fill out the forms each year and tell us what they liked and what they didn't like. And each year we keep getting more positive feedback."

At Jacob's Pillow interns are expected to work at least eight hours a day. Depending on what they are doing, that could even stretch to 10 or 12 hours. "On Saturdays," for example, said Owen, "when we have two shows, technical interns work through the first show, work through the second show, and then have to strike (take down the set and put it away) at night. So they'd be quite busy, then. But the next day, they might not have to work at all."

Besides technical interns, there are also administrative interns, but because it isn't likely that high school students would have any background in administration, these positions are usually given to college undergrads or graduate students.

In addition to the actual work, there are special events just for the interns: weekly workshops or discussions with professionals in some area of theater management, stage lighting, dance or directing. There are early morning dance

classes not available to the dance students, career counseling, and opportunities to interview for jobs or internships with other theater companies.

"I was so inspired," said Kate. "I was in a place with people who were just on the verge of auditioning for professional companies. I was working with people who had chosen to become performing artists. And what was so brilliant about Jacob's Pillow was how they combined older people who are becoming professionals, or people who are professionals, in the theater, with younger people just starting out. I was expected to be there every morning at seven, and if I was expected to strike until three a.m., it didn't matter that one person was 25 and I was 15."

David, who always knew he wanted to find a place in the world of theater, became fascinated with dance lighting. He returned to Jacob's Pillow for another internship two years later. In between, he'd begun a major in theater at Boston University and had worked as an intern in other kinds of theater. "And," he said, "the second summer (at Jacob's Pillow) was even more enjoyable because I'd done it all before."

Summer Opportunities in Marine and Environmental Science cites around 200 interesting jobs. Order for $8.95 from White Pond Press (28 Litchfield Road, Londonderry, NH 03053).

TRAINING IN RESEARCH SKILLS

Michelle Stewart has always been torn between her two loves: music and science. All through high school she'd concentrated on music, but in her junior year, decided to apply for an internship at The Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor, Maine. The Jackson Laboratory is a private research institution, with ties to the University of Maine and other colleges and laboratories, which conducts research in mammalian genetics.

What Michelle liked about the program was that it was the only one she'd found that invited both high school and college students to intern.

Mr. Robert F. Shea, program manager for the training and education office says that each student is sponsored by a member of the research staff. "A mentor relationship is established between the student and the researcher." The intern becomes directly involved in the mentor's research.

The Jackson Laboratory may be contacted at 600 Main Street, Bar Harbor, ME 04609. (Telephone 207-288-3371, extension 253.) Its application deadline is mid-March.

Michelle was amazed at how much information she absorbed in a short period of time. "I didn't have an extensive background in biology. I had my basics, but by the end of the summer, when I spoke about my work to the other students in a seminar, I kind of stopped and listened to myself. I was shocked. I had to memorize a lot of stuff; I had to have a working knowledge of terms. My sponsor worked closely with me, and he did a good job of imparting knowledge and inspiring scientific curiosity. It was all so fascinating."

In addition to her work in the laboratory, Michelle did a great deal of reading on her own. "I read so many journal articles that were even remotely related to what we were doing. We were examining certain proteins, and I read a lot about them, too."

THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

Mary Lynn Sienkiewicz, from Scranton, Pennsylvania, used to cry when she saw dead animals on the road. Even so, she developed a strong interest in biology in high school. When she graduated, she accepted an internship with the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

One of her jobs was to freeze-dry animals. "These were small mammals, birds and reptiles for exhibition purposes. One beaver I freeze-dried was for an Indian tribe out west." At least, Mary Lynn noted, she didn't have to kill the animals. They were brought to her laboratory by the parks department crew whose job it was to keep the parks free of dead animals. "The internship gave me a good idea of the application of what I was doing, especially for museum work. My supervisor was fantastic, very inspirational." What Mary Lynn learned was that her interest in biology didn't have to lead in a single direction. Her supervisor had had many different careers, and by observing a professional whom she admired, she was convinced that a major in biology was for her.

The Student Guide to Mass Media Internships lists opportunities with newspaper, magazines, and book publishers (volume I) and radio, TV, and cable stations (volume II). Cost for each volume is $30 and they may be ordered from the Broadcast Intern Research Group (Box 52 Regent Hall, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO 80309).

Like David who returned to Jacob's Pillow, Mary Lynn returned to the Smithsonian—but after she'd finished her degree in biology and taught science in the public schools for a couple of years. Mary Lynn came back to the Smithsonian as the salaried coordinator of the internship program. "I love the Washington area so much. There are so many things to do here."

For information contact the High School Intern Program, Smithsonian Institution, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, (Arts and Industrial Building, Room 1163, Washington, DC 20560). (Telephone 202-357-3049). The application deadline is mid-March.

The Smithsonian offers 40 internships in a variety of fields as diverse as carpentry, archaeology, biology, library science, photography, history and art. These internships are only for high school graduates during the summer in which they graduate.

"We're looking for students who have a deep, abiding interest in a particular field," said one Smithsonian education specialist. "We're not looking for the student who says, 'Gee all these would be interesting things to do.' Yet, applicants don't necessarily have to be in the top of their class. We get kids who are motivated, hard-working, and self-disciplined. We're interested in people who will come here and be happy to be doing what they love, as opposed to someone just picking off another honor."

WHERE DO INTERNS LIVE WHEN THEY HAVE TO LEAVE HOME?

Since many internship programs take place far away from home, host agencies secure housing for you. In fact, living with other interns who are experiencing some of the same things you are, turns out to be a special bonus in itself. And, depending on the arrangements, getting along with other interns can also bring up some problems.

The Dynamy program houses its interns in apartments which it owns. Usually there are four people to an apartment. Part of the cost of the program goes towards rent. In addition, the parents of the interns may deposit expense money with Dynamy, which is then doled out to students weekly for food and phone bills. This is so that they can learn how to budget their money.

"They say that everything in the world is good for something."
John Dryden

Gloria had terrific housemates. "They were great," she said. "I'm still in touch with them, and last summer I roomed with one."

Yet there were many things about living in Worcester that didn't agree with Gloria. "Although the Dynamy staff will tell you something different, there really isn't that much to do in Worcester. There are many cities with a lot more to offer. Also, it's easy to burn out doing the Dynamy thing because you're working nine to five every day, and you're tired when you get back to your apartment. And we wouldn't have the energy to go, say to Boston, which is only 40 minutes away. In college you see your roommates really often because you have classes with them. In Dynamy, you have to make a real effort to see people. And that can be difficult."

The biggest drawback was in not having enough contact with other interns, and in not having a big peer group as you do in college.

For Kate Churchill, living right on the grounds of Jacob's Pillow with all of the staff, dancing students and interns became part of her education. "I had come from a very conservative New England private school, and here I was surrounded by this performing arts world. I'd never been in a situation like that.

"There were things that were totally new to me. In my school, homosexuality was just taboo. That's what you joked about. And in the dance world there is a lot of homosexuality. The first night I was at Jacob's Pillow, I sat next to a guy who had on sandals and pink toenail polish. So I started out with a very negative attitude. But as the summer went on, a lot of these same people became my best friends, and I'm still in touch with them. This experience opened up a new view for

me." When that summer was over, and Kate returned to her school, she no longer tolerated people who made bad jokes about homosexuals.

A popular method of arranging internships is through the Washington Center (514 10th Street NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20004). Students from over 800 colleges and universities have participated in its programs.

"And there were lots of other things, too," Kate notes, that made an impact on her. "It was the first time I'd lived alone. It was the first time no one was checking up on me to see what time I came home. It made me a lot more independent and openminded."

Director Norton Owen commented that there are seven different programs going on at the dance festival, including two five-week programs of performances on the main stage, a jazz project with more than 30 people from all over the country and abroad, plus dance students and the interns. "Many people say that they are happy to live with each other. They learn what dancers' lives are really like. We mix the different populations, so we don't have a student cabin and an intern cabin. They are all people who have a lot to share with each other, and we try to provide opportunities for them to bounce ideas off one another. At meal times, too, there is a great opportunity to exchange information. Meals are family style and informal. You join whatever table you want to."

A 32-ROOM HOUSE OVERLOOKING FRENCHMAN'S BAY

All Jackson Laboratory summer interns live in a picturesque mansion called High Seas. Situated right next to The Acadia National Park, the views all around are breathtaking. Two or three interns room together, and meals are prepared for the interns daily, except for weekends when interns take turns doing dinners. Also, cleaning up is always done by the interns. "I think," said Michelle, " that we each did dishes for about a week, and we formed groups to cook on weekends. Our group did that twice. And it was a lot of fun. We got to make whatever we wanted. One time we made my mother's recipe for quiche and her chocolate chip cake, which was really good."

If you like Spanish moss hanging from trees and a truly southern atmosphere, then a short-term internship at the Spoleto Music Festival (PO Box 157, Charleston, SC 29402) may be of interest. Apprenticeships are offered in a variety of stage and backstage jobs for a three-week period in May-June of each year.

Except for the first week, when there was some difficulty with one of her roommates (just the normal kind of incompatible personalities, which got resolved when one roommate exchanged rooms with someone more agreeable), Michelle thought that the group experience was what she benefited from most. "You know," she said, "It's not often that you have an opportunity to be with all kinds of people who are really intelligent. I was very shy, and it was really a sharing experience. I came out of it a lot more confident."

Yet, not all interns are comfortable in this sort of group situation. One intern felt uncomfortable, and thought the summer in which she interned people didn't always get along

with one another. "It felt to me as if there was a lot of tension; people seemed to split into little groups. Yet I talked to other people afterwards, and they said they got along very well. I think that the college students got along much better. I found them to be more friendly."

LIFE IN A COLLEGE DORM

"Without labor nothing prospers."
Sophocles

The Smithsonian Institution houses its interns at a nearby college dormitory. Interns receive a stipend to cover their food and transportation to and from work. Each dorm has a coordinator who also serves as a house parent. The coordinator of the program tries to schedule fun activities over the weekends, such as trips to the beach and other events. Said Mary Lynn, "although some students have a difficult time developing a positive attitude, only one intern has had to be sent home in 12 years."

Clearly, in any group living situation, problems come up — but having a positive attitude can mean the difference between having a great time, and feeling left out of things. If you do find yourself in a difficult living situation, it's important to figure out what would make the situation better. If it's a change in roommate, or a chat with a coordinator, then take care of it as soon as possible. Don't let things build up. You're there to get the very most out of the internship possible and — as most of the interns agree — living together is part of the total package.

CREATING HER OWN INTERNSHIP

A free booklet, One Friendship at a Time: Your Guide to International Youth Exchange, is available from the Consumer Information Center (PO Box 100, Pueblo, CO 82001). Ask for booklet 512N.

Naomi Calvo had no idea she'd become involved in an internship when her father moved the family from upstate New York to Seattle, Washington for several months where he was doing research at the University of Washington. "Actually, it was my younger sister who was responsible for getting me involved," Naomi said. The family had moved in July, and the two girls were having difficulty figuring out what to do for the summer. "I was looking for volunteer work, and my sister was looking for almost anything to do. She was 12, and too young to get a job. I was 15. I was checking out lots of different things."

Naomi's dad happened to discover the Child Development and Retardation Center at the University. It had a school for children with special disabilities. "My dad walked into the school and asked if they would want a 12 year old volunteer to work with the kids. They said, 'sure.' My sister, Sara, loves little kids, and she wanted to do this but was afraid to go to the school by herself the first time. So I came along to keep her spirits up."

While Sara had an interview with one of the nursery school teachers, Naomi chatted with the coordinator of testing, Dr.

"Pauli" Mills. "They were looking at methods of teaching handicapped kids — and I had done a theme on how to make schools more effective — and we started talking about the merits of different kinds of instruction."

By the time the two sisters left the Center, Sara had secured a volunteer position in one of the classrooms, and Naomi was asked to become a summer intern working on the testing program.

Information on living, working, or studying abroad is presented in Transitions Abroad, a magazine published five times a year. For information write 18 Hulst Road, Amherst, MA 01004.

It was an experience that changed Naomi's life. "I learned from so many people," said Naomi. "I worked with five graduate students and one professor on a research project. I got interested in child development and psychology as a career option." When one teacher had had a particularly difficult day, Naomi offered to work with her class. "It was amazing how fast I became attached to the kids," she said.

Later, during the school term, Naomi discovered that it was possible for her to continue the internship as part of a high school requirement. So she returned to the Center and was given her own research project to develop. "It was all my own. I learned how to do research and how to write it up. Most of all, I learned that there was a lot I could do that could affect so many people's lives. As a teenager, you are just a student going to school — this was actually doing something. It put college in perspective."

CHAPTER VI

CAN I BECOME A REAL MAN OR WOMAN BY JOINING THE MILITARY ?

A television ad shows a recent high school graduate telling his dad that he's going to join the Army and learn all about computers. His dad is proud of him. " Be All that You Can Be," the television blares. "Join the U S Army."

The services put out a free book which lists 130 clusters of occupations in the military. Write HQ USMEPCOM/MEPCT, (1500 Green Bay Road, North Chicago, IL 60064 for a copy of The Military Career Guide: Employment and Training Opportunities.

The U S Air Force ad shows a handsome officer putting on his flight helmet. As he jumps into a sleek F-14 fighter plane and revs up the engine, he waves to a beautiful girl. Then he flies off into the sunset. "Join the Air Force," you are urged. "Become a fighter pilot."

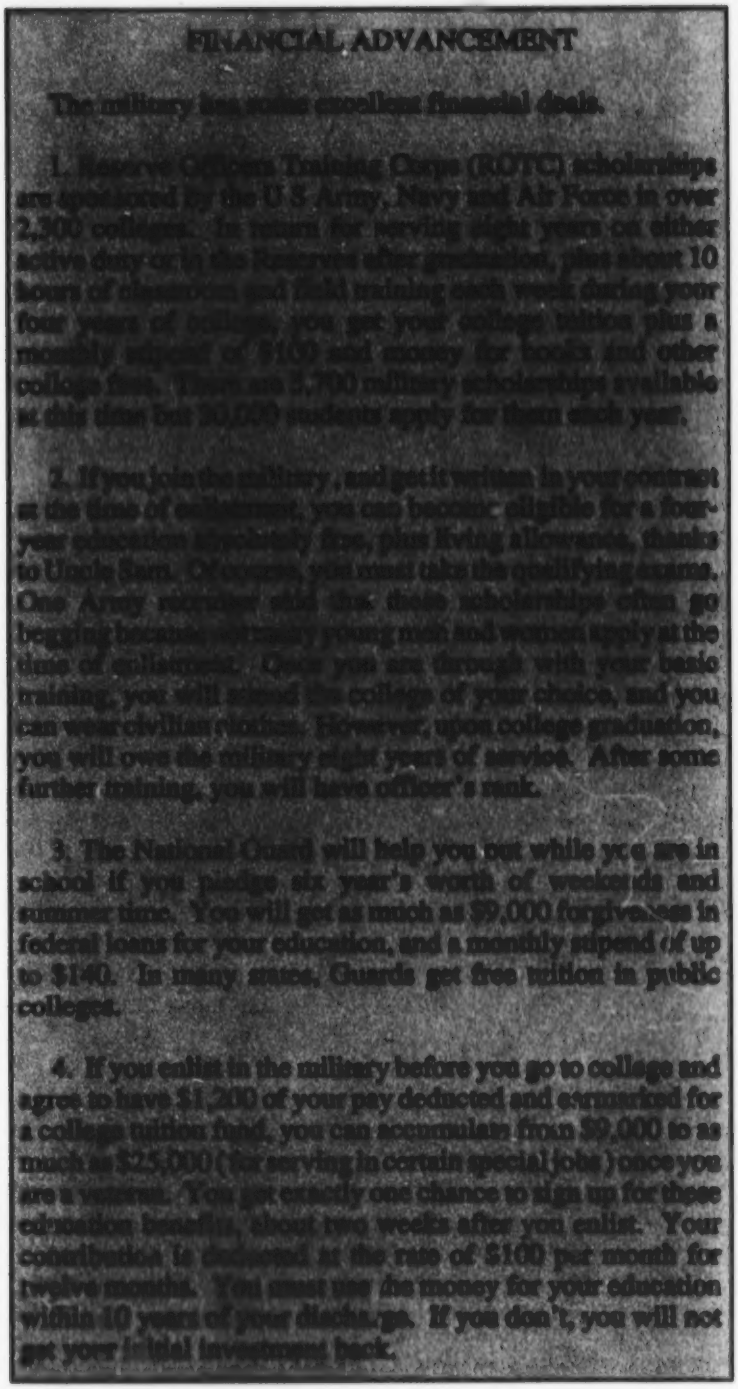
A U S Navy recruiter comes to your school in his crisp dress uniform, and extolls the virtues of a naval career. "If you join the Navy you'll see the world."

And, of course, the United States Marines are always "looking for a few good men." You could be one of them.

"Well," you may think," perhaps I ought to consider a hitch in the military." After all, when you turn 18, if you are male, you are obligated to register for the draft, even though at this time, there is no draft. As an unregistered male student you cannot apply for any Federally funded financial aid packages for your college education. Worse yet, if you don't register, you can be prosecuted and actually go to jail. That's a pretty chilling thought.

From Soldier to Civilian: How to Use Military Job Training To Get a Civilian Job sells for $12.95 from ARCO Publishing (Simon and Schuster, 1 Gulf Western Plaza, New York, NY 10023).

Perhaps your father or brother, uncle or aunt, grandfather or other relative spent three or four or more years in the military. And you've heard them reminisce about the "good old days." They kind of gloss over the bad parts and talk about the different countries they saw, the friends they made, the good times they had — and of fulfilling an obligation to their country. Some people may tell you that the "Army really straightened me out." Or, "I learned discipline in the Navy." Perhaps a relative went to college under the G.I. Bill. Getting some money to pay for your college education by giving your country a couple of years of your life doesn't sound so bad. It might even turn out that a military career is really what you are looking for.


FINANCIAL ADVANCEMENT
The military has some excellent financial deals.
1. Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) scholarships are sponsored by the U.S. Army, Navy and Air Force in over 2,300 colleges. In return for serving eight years on either active duty or in the Reserves after graduation, plus about 10 hours of classroom and field training each week during your four years of college, you get your college tuition plus a monthly stipend of $100 and money for books and other college fees. There are 2,700 military scholarships available at this time but 30,000 students apply for them each year.
2. If you join the military, and get it written in your contract at the time of enlistment, you can become eligible for a four-year education absolutely free, plus living allowances, thanks to Uncle Sam. Of course, you must take the qualifying exams. One Army recruiter said that these scholarships often go begging because not many young men and women apply at the time of enlistment. Once you are through with your basic training, you will attend the college of your choice, and you can wear civilian clothes. However, upon college graduation, you will owe the military eight years of service. After some further training, you will have officer's rank.
3. The National Guard will help you out while you are in school if you pledge six year's worth of weekends and summer time. You will get as much as $9,000 forgiveness in federal loans for your education, and a monthly stipend of up to $140. In many states, Guards get free tuition in public colleges.
4. If you enlist in the military before you go to college and agree to have $1,200 of your pay deducted and earmarked for a college tuition fund, you can accumulate from $9,000 to as much as $25,000 (for serving in certain special jobs) once you are a veteran. You get exactly one chance to sign up for these education benefits, about two weeks after you enlist. Your contribution is deducted at the rate of $100 per month for twelve months. You must use the money for your education within 10 years of your discharge. If you don't, you will not get your initial investment back.

Women now make up 10.4 percent of the military forces and a recent review opened up additional jobs to them.

Getting the Job You Really Want helps to plan career moves through a workbook format. Order for $9.25 from Jist Works, 720 N Park Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 48202).

And don't those uniforms look great. After wearing nothing but blue jeans for almost all of your life, dressing in one of those nifty uniforms might seem terrific. Besides, you really don't know what you want to do with your life right now. A couple of years in the military? How bad can it be? In fact, from what all of the brochures, TV commercials and your local recruiter are saying, you could be in for a grand

adventure—all paid for by Uncle Sam—and you can wind up with a marketable civilian skill.

"It is more important to do the right thing than to do things right."
Peter Drucker,
Management Consultant

Wait! Before you rush down to your friendly recruiter and sign up, do some serious investigating. Be absolutely certain that you know what you are getting yourself into. Trying to get out of the military if you decide it doesn't suit you isn't as simple as dropping a course you didn't like. Be sure you are making a sensible choice. The military may be just right for you, but if you don't get all the facts before you enlist, you may wind up a very unhappy person for the next two, three or four years. And from what people who have served in the military will tell you, your attitude will determine a great deal about how your life in the service will be.

LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP

Tim Ryan of Groton, New York, was admitted into the University of Delaware before he finished high school. He was just 16 years old. This turned out not to be a very good idea.

"I went there for a year, and managed to maintain a 2.8 average, but I didn't go to classes very much. Finally, I decided I was wasting my time and not learning a thing.

Ninety percent of the Army's enlisted personnel are now high school graduates — compared to only 54 percent in 1984.

"So, I quit, and worked on a drill rig for Empire Soils Corporation. Then when I was 18, I took the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery. I've always been a good test taker, and I did real well on it."

The ASVAB is given in your local high school by a test administrator from the Federal Government. It is free, takes about three hours, and requires no preparation on your part. Taking ASVAB doesn't obligate you in any way to join the military. However, once you take it, you can be sure that you will be called upon by recruiters from all branches of the service.

Tim recalled that ever since he was a little kid, he wanted to be in the Marines. "I was always playing war, but I didn't have any concept of what that was. I thought it was all Hollywood World War II movies. All of the glory and none of the blood."

<u>How The Military Will Help You Pay For College</u> was written by an administrator at Princeton University. Order for $6.95 from Peterson's Guide (PO Box 2123, Princeton, NJ 08543).

While Tim was thinking about this, he was called by an Air Force recruiter who told him that his test scores were really excellent. He told Tim that one of the good things about the Air Force is that "it builds character and discipline."

"And," Tim said, "I thought, boy! I could really use a shot of discipline in my life." Lack of self-discipline was something Tim worried about a lot. He was afraid that he would go

through life that way, and here was the Air Force recruiter offering him a life-line.

Tim retook the ASVAB and did even better the second time. Right after that he signed a contract to enlist in the Air Force for the next four years.

Tim used the computer at the recuitment headquarters to look up the many specialties the Air Force offers. "I wanted to go into intelligence, "he said, "but there were no openings."

The recruiter told Tim that maybe there would be openings in six months, "So if you go in now under a 'general category." with your test scores, I can almost assure you that you'll get what you want."

An ROTC course completion no longer guarantees an active duty service as a commissioned officer after receiving a bachelor's degree. There are currently too many junior officers already on active duty.

Tim was confident. And he heard only what he wanted to hear from the recruiter. He figured that with his year of college Russian, and his great test scores, he was just what Air Force intelligence was looking for. So he signed his contract agreeing to enlist under something called "general category". He didn't pay attention to a couple of key words the recruiter used: ALMOST and MAYBE.

The contract Tim signed didn't say a word about being trained for intelligence.

Did Tim do something foolish? Yes, indeed. He soon learned that without a guaranteed contract, he would never make it into intelligence training. He quickly discovered that by entering the service under a "general category," Uncle Sam wants your body, not your mind.

HOW TO AVOID MISTAKES WHEN ENLISTING IN THE MILITARY

The time to avoid making mistakes is before you sign your contract.

1. Forget about all of the movies and TV shows you've seen about World War II, the Korean War and Viet Nam.

2. Remember that the advertisements for the military are just that: advertisements meant to get you to believe you can be trained for something very special right out of school.

Fact #1. No high school graduate can become a pilot. The television commercial doesn't tell you that. You have to be a college graduate in a technical field such as engineering to even be considered for flight school, and then you have to spend time being trained as an officer, plus 110 hours as a pilot. According to New York State Veterans Counselor Harry De Libero, only 10% of those who are admitted into flight school ever succeed.

Fact #2. Very few jobs in the military are actually transferable to civilian life. There isn't much call for a someone who can help build a bomb. There isn't much call for someone who can drive a tank. Counselor DeLibero notes that "The military is not a college. They are not going to train you for civilian work." Although it is true that every person who is discharged from the military has his job listed in a parallel civilian name, most of these are not appropriate . Fully 30 percent of the job titles have no civilian name.

Fact #3. Much of the enlistee's work will center around carring a rifle, pulling guard duty, picking up cigarette butts and mindless drugery.

"Those that cannot obey, cannot command."
Benjamin Franklin

Fact #4. You have to remember the purpose of going into the military is to learn how to kill. Don't ever forget that.

3. If the commercial or booklet says you can"go into computers," find out what that means. If you are not careful, you will wind up sweeping out the room where they keep the computers. It doesn't mean that the Army will train you top to bottom with everything you ever wanted to know about computers, unless it is specifically written into the contract you sign.

4. The only ad that is realistic is the one in which there are guys driving tanks. As a high school graduate, you can learn to drive a tank, if that's what you want to do. But you will not spend all of your time doing that. You will do a lot of 'policing' the ground.

5. Read your contract, and don't be prejudiced by the person talking to you. Recuriters are trained to talk with 17 and 18 year olds. They know exactly what to say to make you feel very important— and they have a monthly quota to fill.

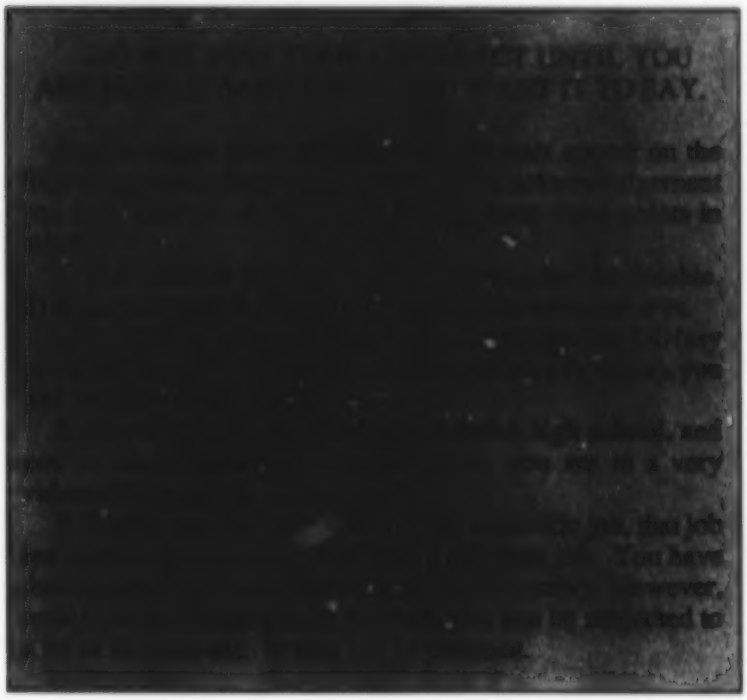
6. Do not sign anything right there in the recruiter's office. Take your time. Take the contract home and have at least one other adult person go over your contract with you. If it doesn't say exactly what you want it to say, DON'T SIGN IT. Go back to the recruiter's office, with your notes, and get the contract changed. Then take the second version home with you, and have someone go over it with you.

7. If you are smart, you won't sign up until the area in which you are interested in has become available. It's fine to wait several months or even a year for a speciality that really suits you. In the meantime, you can get yourself some technical skills — perhaps by signing up for a course or two at your local community college.

8. There are some very definate advantages to joining the military as long as you have a clear idea of what you are getting

into. So, the best advice is to take yourself very, very seriously. It is going to be your life on the line. Every day for the next several years you will wake up and still be a memeber of the armed services. You owe it to yourself, and to the branch of service you choose, to see that your special talents are used to the fullest.

"The great truths are too important to be new."
Somerset Maugham, Novelist



STATEMENT FOR ENLISTMENT
UNITED STATES ARMY ENLISTMENT OPTION
US ARMY DELAYED ENLISTMENT PROGRAM

For use of this form, see AR 601-201; the proponent agency is the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel.

1. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**: In connection with my enlistment into the United States Army Reserve, I hereby acknowledge that:

a. My enlistment in the US Army Reserve obligates me to a total of 8 years service in the US Armed Forces, including service in the Reserve components, unless sooner discharged by proper authority. Fulfillment of this obligation begins on the date I enlist in the Delayed Entry Program.

b. I will be assigned to the US Army Reserve Control Group *(Delayed Entry)*, during which time I will be in a nonpay status and will not be authorized to participate in any Reserve training.

c. I volunteer to serve on active duty for two years in any job assignment specified by the Army, such period to begin within 99 days unless I enlist into the Regular Army, or I am granted further delay by proper authority.

d. In lieu of performing the active duty specified in c above, I may enlist into the Regular Army for a period of 4 Years 0 Weeks with the following understanding:

(1) Upon enlistment into the Regular Army, I will be enlisted under the provisions of Army Regulation 601-210, option or options as indicated below:

– Option 9- 19 TITLE US ARMY STATION/COMMAND OF CHOICE

– Option 9- _____ TITLE _____

– Option 9- _____ TITLE _____

– Option 9- _____ TITLE _____

(enter appropriate primary option and indicate all associated options)

(2) If enlisting for an Army school course I have been assured of attending the school course for MOS or CMF:

51B10 TITLE CARPENTRY & MASONARY SPECIALIST

(enter military occupational specialty or career management field & title)

(3) In the event through no fault of my own that my enlistment option, school course, or training of my choice is cancelled or otherwise not available before I enlist into the Regular Army, I will elect one of the following alternatives:

(a) I will elect another option, school course or training of my choice for which I am qualified and a vacancy exists.

(b) I will be separated from the Delayed Entry Program.

(4) The date of my enlistment into the Regular Army is scheduled for: 3 NOV 19 _

(5) In the event that I willfully fail to report for active duty on the date specified in (4) above and on my DD Form 4 enlistment contract I understand that I will be in an Absent Without Leave Status *(AWOL)* and subject to apprehension in accordance with article 86 and if appropriate article 85 *(deserter)* of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

(6) I further certify that I am currently enrolled as a senior in high school and I understand that my enlistment into the Delayed Entry Program is contingent upon my successful completion of high school. _____
(Initials)

(7) I understand that the course I have selected requires me to present proof in the form of a transcript or letter from school officials stating I have successfully completed a course or courses of instruction in

_____
(enter Subject(s), i.e., Math, Science, etc.)

(8) I certify that I have read or have viewed the Job Description for the MOS I am enlisting for and further acknowledge that I understand the general nature of the training I will receive. TGB
(Initials)

STATEMENT FOR ENLISTMENT – CONTINUED

(9) I also acknowledge that if I am qualified and I am enlisting for an MOS or CMF that has a Cash Bonus, that the bonus amount authorized on my enlistment into the Regular Army will be the amount authorized upon my entry into the Delayed Entry Program. Further I understand that the Bonus for my CMF/MOS on this date is $ NONEX IGB (Amount/Initials). *(Note: If enlisting for an MOS which has a Cash Bonus and applicant declined such bonus the word "Declined" is entered in the Amount Block. If no bonus authorized enter "NONE").* If the word declined is entered above I hereby state I was offered an enlistment option for a bonus and declined such option.

(10) If I have enlisted for guaranteed 1st assignment of Europe, I inderstand that should I acquire a dependent prior to my active duty date, I will no longer be qualified for a guaranteed assignment to Europe. *(This does not preclude assignment to Europe at the discretion of the Army)*

(11) I certify I have provided my recruiter and counselor all information required on my application for enlistment, further, I have not concealed any medical information and I further state that no person has advised me to conceal any information with respect to my enlisment.

2. UNDERSTANDING: I understand that in the event the Secretary of the Army determines that military necessity of a national scope requires that service members be available for immediate assignment/reassignment, any guarantees contained in this agreement may be terminated. Under these conditions I may be assigned or reassigned according to the needs of the Army.

I have read and understand each of the statements above and in the DD Form 1966 series, signed by me, and understand that these statements are intended to constitute all promises whatsoever concerning my enlistment. Any other promise or representation of commitments made to me in connection with my enlistment is written below in my own handwriting, or is hereby waived *(if none, write "NONE").*

Contract Control Number CCN: 68ØØ8695

NONE X.

AUTHENTICATION		
SIGNATURE OF GUIDANCE COUNSELOR (Witness)	SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT	DATE
TYPED NAME, GRADE AND SSN OF COUNSELOR	TYPED NAME, SSN OF APPLICANT	DATE

What you will receive from the recruiter may be as informal as the printout below. However, it may be the only offical notice you will be given about the service's contract with you, so retain it carefully. You should have some copies made and leave one or two with family or friends in case yours becomes lost.

****

CONGRATULATIONS! [redacted] [redacted]

YOUR RESERVATION FOR:
MOS 51B1 - CARPENTRY AND MASONRY SPECIALIST
OPTION 19 - US ARMY STATION OF CHOICE
FIRST ASSIGNMENT - FORS. IS CONFIRMED.

YOUR ENLISTMENT DATE IS: 3 NOV
YOUR RECSTA LOCATION IS: LWOOD
YOUR BT LOCATION IS: LWOOD
WHILE SPECIFIC TRAINING LOCATIONS ARE NOT GUARANTEED YOU ARE TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED TO RECEIVE AIT AT: LWOOD

IN ORDER FOR YOUR RESERVATION TO REMAIN VALID. YOU MUST REMAIN PHYSICALLY AND MORALLY QUALIFIED FOR ENLISTMENT. PLEASE REPORT ANY CHANGES THAT MAY AFFECT YOUR STATUS TO YOUR RECRUITER IMMEDIATELY.

****

CAREFUL RESEARCH PAYS OFF

How much will you earn in your lifetime? Here are averages based upon highest level of education completed: High school graduate (female) $381,000 ,(male) $523,000. College graduate (female) $861,000, (male) $1,190,000.

Like Tim Ryan, Steve Yatko, from Clark Summit, Pennsylvania, had always been interested in the military. "My father," said Steve, "is a civilian who works for the government." Steve always believed that serving his country in some capacity was in the cards for him. Steve dreamed of becoming a pilot. "I've wanted to fly ever since I was a baby, almost." he said. In fact, he obtained his private pilot's license before he turned 16. Steve believes that the "military is the best place to get flight training. And after training, you can fly the world's best aircraft. I want to do that. All of my life flying has been a constant."

But Steve had another compelling reason for becoming a military man. " I was always a 'B' student. My SAT scores were 1130. I looked upon myself as an average student. There are millions of people just like me and millions of people who are smarter than I." Steve knew that he'd have to do something outstanding in order to qualify for an ROTC scholarship.

Under the "new GI Bill" as much as $10,800 can be accrued during a three-year enlistment for later college cost. By signing up for jobs with less relevance to the civilian workforce (infantry, artillery, etc.) even more can be set aside.

So, when Steve was 16, he put a lot of things about himself together: his accurate assessment of his scholastic abilities, his desire to be of service to his country, his love of flying, his desire for a college education—with a solid major in government. Then he talked to scads of people, both in the military and out. "I got a lot of opinions and ideas on different routes I might examine."

Steve decided that the Navy offered the best opportunity for what he wanted. Among them was a year after high school graduation at a special prep school called BOOST. This Navy school in San Diego, California, is a "thirteenth high school year," specifically designed to be a training ground for future Naval officers. In order to get into it, you must agree to join the Navy. "If you pass their very stiff courses in chemistry, calculus, physics, English, writing and reading, "Steve said, "you get a scholarship to an ROTC school or to the Naval Academy in Annapolis."

Steve talked to the recruiter and told him,"I want to go to BOOST." They reviewed his high school record and thought there would not be a problem , but he had to take ASVAB—the same test that Tim Ryan took. "I did all right in that test," and a couple of weeks later, the Navy recruiter guaranteed IN WRITING that Steve was admitted to BOOST. "All I had to do, then, was enlist and join the Navy."

Steve knew that there were some very serious consequences if he flunked out of BOOST.

"If I did not make it out of this school, I owed the Navy seven years of active duty." There is a 50% dropout rate from BOOST. And the Navy could use Steve in any way it wanted, including sweeping out the latrines for all seven years. Flunking out of BOOST would have dashed all hopes of flight training and of free college tuition. "It was," he admitted, "constantly on my mind."

"Small opportunities are often the beginnings of great achievements."
Calvin Coolidge

Nevertheless, a week after he graduated high school, just after he'd celebrated his 17th birthday, Steve found himself 3,000 miles away from his home in Pennsylvania. For the next three months he was in boot camp in San Diego, California. After that, he was granted a month's leave. Then he took a nine-month stint at BOOST.

While Steve was in BOOST," they sort of brainwashed me into going to the Academy (Annapolis). And I fell for it." Steve wanted a degree in government, but found that the Naval Academy needed men and women who were strong in chemistry, chemical engineering, calculus and physics. "Out of seven courses, only one was in political science, "Steve said. By the end of his first year, Steve decided to leave the Academy and enter a civilian college through the ROTC program. He would still be fulfilling his end of the contract, and he still had his goal of becoming a pilot. " They really hassled me to stay in the Academy, "Steve recalled. But because BOOST had promised Steve an education through either the Naval Academy or a college with an ROTC program, he was able to transfer to a college in upstate New York. If Steve hadn't gone into the BOOST program, he would have owed the Navy three years of active duty because he decided to drop out of the Naval Academy after completing just one year.

"The Naval Academy is the only place in the world where they take away all of your God-given rights at entry and give them back to you, one at a time, over the next four years, as privileges."
Naval Academy Midshipman

Veterans counselor Harry De Libero cautions that Steve's agreement is a very rare one. Virtually all students at the United States military academies are chosen via a process that requires approval of their local congressional representative.

LIVING WITH UNCERTAINITY

Even though Steve's grades are "B's" and better , and even if he faithfully fulfills his ROTC requirements as a student, there is no guarantee that, upon college graduation, he will make it into flight school. "I think that the only thing that is certain in life is death,"Steve says. "I've taken a few exams so far— physicals and aviation tests—and right now, everything is OK." But if his eyesight should not be perfect, that will keep him out. If there is no need for pilots when Steve graduates, then he won't be able to fly. "Nothing is definite. But I want to fly. That's what I want to do, no matter what."

Steve is willing to accept other assignments after graduation

if flight training isn't available, but he will again apply to flight school. "I'm going to keep on applying."

Steve has carefully plotted his course, but not everything has worked out as he thought it would. Most disappointing was his year at the Naval Academy. "When I was in high school, we all looked upon the Academy as, well, terrific. The reality is quite different. When you are on the outside, you aren't always going to be told the truth. I was told one thing, and the reality was another."

Contact points for service academies: Director of Cadet Admissions, US Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO, 80840. Office of Admissions, US Military Academy, West Point, NY 10996. Office of Admissions, US Coast Guard Academy, New London, CT 06320. Director of Candidate Guidance, US Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD 21402.

Steve's objection was not to the military life, but to the classes. From his point of view, no matter what you decide to major in, "everybody majors in the same thing. That's because the Navy is a very technically oriented business. They are looking for technical people."

A problem arose once he decided to transfer to a civilian college. Because he enrolled in college after the admissions process had closed, he discovered that the paperwork for his ROTC scholarship couldn't be completed in time for the current year. So, for the first year of civilian college, Steve had to pay tuition out of his own pocket. Even with generous support from his family, and a small stipend from the Navy, he worked 40 hours a week to support himself, while taking as many as 21 credits a semester. He has taken extra credits because he plans to graduate from college in three years so that he will have a better chance at flight school. Steve knows there may be cutbacks in military spending, and wants to apply for flight school before those cuts affect the Navy.

In short, Steve refuses to lose sight of his goal. "No matter what path I take, I still have the same final destination." And his disappointment with the Naval Academy did not discourage another member of his family from applying to it. Steve's younger sister, who is a math major, was just recently accepted into Annapolis. Steve is pretty certain that his sister will have a more difficult time than most men, and says that his sister will have to be "strong and stubborn, and she'll have to play their game." However, since his sister's strength lies in the sciences, "she'll probably do just fine."

"I'll never have the slightest doubt about my ability to handle a job and raise a family. That will be a snap after four years at West Point."
Female Military Academy Senior

"Not many of my friends at home can say they've been on a sub, been a Marine for a week, been in an F-14 simulator, or for that matter have been restricted to their room on Saturday night for failing to make their bed."

Naval Academy Midshipman

TIM'S STORY (CONTINUED)

Fortunately, there were some things Tim did right. From the beginning, he signed up to contribute the $1,200 to his college fund. Next, even though he realized that he'd made a mistake in not enlisting for a specific job, he figured there was nothing he could do about it, and he decided to save his money and try to enjoy himself. His straightforward attitude and high spirits (among other things) landed him a job in communications training. His job was to be flown into an area with a crew and set up the advanced air bases. "In case of a war," he said, "We'd have to fly in and set up the communications systems." But during his years in the service, there was never a war.

For the first year and a half, Tim had a good time in the Air Force. But by the end of the second year, "I just became more and more disillusioned," he said. "It wasn't anything definite." It was more a matter of observing some things that were happening to his friends when they got into trouble. Some of them received less than honorable discharges.

The concept of Outward Bound developed during World War II to help make sailors whose ships had been sunk realize how much they might do to save themselves. Today, the programs are used to help people discover the full extent of their own resources. For information contact Outward Bound (384 Field Point Road, Greenwich, CT 06830). Ask for the current course schedule.

Tim had also had enough time to think about what he really wanted to learn in college, and he was anxious to get started. So he began a dialogue with his commander. He told him how strongly he felt about getting out of the Air Force. This did not

"The die is cast"
Shakespeare, Julius Caesar

sit well with his commander, *who was a career officer.* Career military personnel tend to see those who enlist for a short period of time, and who complain about the military life as scoundrels and worse. Tim was sent to see a psychiatrist. He was sent for counseling. After some time, even his commander recognized that Tim was sincere in his desire to get out. Because this was at a time when people were lining up to get into the Air Force, Tim's commander finally agreed to release him—and Tim left the Air Force with an honorable discharge after two years.

If Tim had used his dissatisfaction as an excuse to get into trouble, he would have risked a less than honorable discharge—and that stain on his record would have followed him for the rest of his life.

Tim, however, was fortunate. After just two years he had $6,000 in his education fund, plus $2,500 in savings. And, he didn't feel all that negative about his experience.

"If anybody ever asked me about going into the Air Force, I'd say, 'go ahead.' I would tell you to go for it." Among the things Tim remembers fondly are the friends he made and the cities he got to see.

I TOURED ALL OVER THE WORLD

When Jeff Fullagar graduated from Ithaca (New York) High School, he didn't know what he wanted to do. So like many other young people, he went to work. Even though he was promoted to manager in the ice cream shop, he realized that unless he did something for himself, he was going to be stuck in a series of low-paying jobs.

So he investigated various branches of the military and settled on the Navy. He signed up for three years and never regretted his decision. "Going into the military is basically good for a person," he said. "It teaches you a lot about life. It teaches you how to be on your own, and it teaches you a lot of self-discipline." At the time of his enlistment, Jeff had no way of knowing how important self-discipline was going to be to his future.

In three years, Jeff got to travel all over the world. He thinks that if you go into other branches of the service, you are more likely not to travel as much. "I traveled to the Far East—to Japan, the Philippines and the Middle East during one major crisis." Yet he was not afraid that he'd get caught up in a war. "I was looking forward to it," he said. "It doesn't matter if you're working on nuclear weapons or if you're a cop or making ice cream. Every job has its hazards. I enjoyed serving my country. Somebody has to do it."

Like Tim, Jeff was very careful about his paychecks. "Out of every paycheck I sent home two or three hundred dollars, and it was put away for me. I never saw it, so I was able to save a lot of money. It's a good idea if you get paid $300 every two weeks to send a good chunk of it home. Then you can ration out what's left over the next two weeks. There's really not so much you can spend your money on when you're in the service— you've got all of your food and your housing paid for. You've got medical and dental coverage. The only thing you've got to pay for is if you go out to dinner or a movie or a party."

And of course, when he was aboard ship, there was very little need for cash.

A SENSE OF PURPOSE

Jeff is quick to admit that even when he entered the Navy he wasn't sure that it was exactly the right choice for him. " I didn't know what I wanted to be, and I didn't know what I wanted to do. But I knew that if I didn't like the Navy, I'd leave after my three-year hitch. I figured I'd give it my best shot, and if I wanted to go to school later on, that I could. I could even do it while I was in the service."

A Young Person's Guide to Military Service summarizes options. Cost $6.95 from the Harvard Common Press (535 Albany Street, Boston, MA 02118).

It came as a surprise to Jeff that he loved working on weapons. "It didn't scare me at all. We'd build about 700 weapons in three days, right on board ship. We'd get the bombs, and we'd have to put in the nose and the tail and the fuse. We'd assemble them all and send them to the flight deck."

Jeff really felt that he'd found his niche in the Navy. He planned to make it his career, and had already signed up for another hitch. However a rare medical problem which left him legally blind interfered with his plans. Once it was established that he would be left with only peripheral vision, he received a medical discharge from the Navy. Because this happened while he was in the service, Jeff receives a disability pension.

Once out of the Navy, Jeff had to rethink what he was going to do. He had not yet turned 24. "Even though I have this check coming every month, I knew I had to have something to do with my life."

COMING FULL CIRCLE

Clearly the skill he'd acquired in the Navy, making weapons, wasn't going to do much for him in civilian life. However, Jeff did learn another skill through his naval training that has definitely helped him in his new career. " I was fortunate in learning a lot of leadership skills. And I learned how to work with the public. Through my travels I got to meet so many

different people from so many different cultures. It has helped me a lot in working with people now that I own my store."

Once Jeff learned some coping strategies with his limited sight, he took stock of his possibilities. He talked over his future with a couple of good friends, and decided that he still had a lot of things going for him. First, he had a healthy bank account, thanks to his thrifty ways while in the Navy. Next, he decided he wanted to go into some sort of business. He had, after all, been manager of the ice cream store, and seemed to have "a head for business." Finally, through his Navy friends, he met another person who shared his dream of owning a business.

A recruiting book, Opportunities and Options: U.S. Army Service as an Edge on Life is available free from the Army Recruiting Command, Fort Sheridan, IL 60037

His big break came when the very shop he'd worked in was up for sale. He and his friend bought the store. His partial blindness doesn't stop him from doing his share of the work. "I can't do any paper work, and I have to ask somebody to read me the directions on the bottles. But I can make all of the ice cream and all of the cakes. I can't wait on customers, but I can basically do everything else."

Today, Jeff and his partner own two stores, and are looking forward to branching out once again.

"The big thing about the service is,"notes Jeff, " you have to put in 100 percent. If you do that , you'll get 100 percent back. I saw a lot of kids go into the service, and they're unhappy. They'd get into trouble, and they never advanced. They get out after three years and have nothing to show for it. They didn't save any money or anything. You have to want to go into the service and make it work for you." From Jeff's point of view, the key to making either military life or a business a success is an upbeat and positive attitude.

CHAPTER VII
EARLY COLLEGE ADMISSION: A WISE CHOICE FOR SMART KIDS?

Do you feel you are simply wasting time in high school? Are you the sort of person who gets your homework done in 15 minutes because the work is so easy? Have you ever had the experience of being out of school for a long period of time, only to discover you hadn't missed much? Do you feel that your senior (or junior or even sophomore) year in high school is going to be boring instead of intellectually stimulating? Do you wish, more than anything, that you could be in college right now?

"It is a crime for a 14 or 15 year old to be bored. A bright, motivated kid is finished with high school halfway through 11th grade."
Ba Win, Dean of Students
Simon's Rock College

Marc Larson of Dover, Delaware, had taken all of the advanced classes in math and science before he completed his sophomore year of high school. "If I wasn't asked to do any outside projects, I really wasn't doing much school work at all— and I was still getting by with incredible success. I knew that my grades only had meaning in the sense that they would get me into college where things would be better."

Fortunately, Marc didn't have to wait to finish high school before he was challenged academically. He was offered a scholarship to Simon's Rock of Bard College, and began his college education at age 16. He will graduate from college just after he turns 20—and looks forward to a year or so of travel before going on to graduate school.

Lorin Dytel graduated from high school in Jericho, New York, when she was 16. Initially, she had difficulty convincing her school to let her do this. But she was the first person from her community to be accepted into the Johns Hopkins Center for the Advancement of Academically Talented Youth (CTY) summer program. She'd been going there since seventh grade and had taken so many advanced placement courses, that her high school had nothing more to offer. " I liked it at CTY— I was really academically challenged— and met other kids who liked the same things I did." Knowing college level courses were so much more exciting compared to her high school courses convinced Lorin to complete her secondary education as soon as possible.

The Complete Collegiate sells a "slide guide" which predicts college costs today and for the next 15 years. Send $1.50 to Complete Collegiate (490 Route 46 East, Fairfield, N.J. 07006.)

Of the five colleges Lorin applied to, she was accepted at two— and chose to go to the University of Chicago. "I know that I didn't get into some of the other colleges because of my age, but being a younger student at Chicago doesn't really make a difference. Although, " she concedes, "you might have more problems socially if you are a male. There are fewer females at Chicago, so the social life for women is

great." Of course, she had to limit her social activities because of the work load. "It really shocked me," she said. "Every weekday except for Friday nights I study. It took me until the second quarter to get the hang of it. But I definitely like the great conversations we have here. It's a lot better than in high school. It's a different kind of life."

Kimberly Carter, of Edison, New Jersey, wasn't a super straight-A student in her high school, but, she said,"I loved to study things that interest me." The summer after her junior year, Kimberly attended Rutgers University Summer College for high school students. "I knew even before the summer was over that I didn't want to go back to school. I was taking this course in archaeology, and we were doing some actual digging in an ancient Lenne Lappe settlement in Washington County. It was the most exciting thing I'd ever done."

A booklet, Choosing the College That's Right for You, is available for $1.95 from Peterson's Guide (PO Box 2123, Princeton, NJ 08543).

When Kimberly spoke with the summer college advisor, she discovered that Rutgers offers an early admission option, and even though her high school grades included a couple of C's the recommendations from Kimberly's summer college professors were very strong. "My parents were definitely not happy about this," reports Kimberly. "They figured they had one more year before they'd have to help me with college costs, and I had two other siblings still in college." So Kimberly offered to live at home and commute the short distance to the New Brunswick campus to save money—and was offered enough work-study opportunities to meet the modest tuition cost her first year. "I was just happy going to college," she said. "I didn't much care if I lived on campus or not."

EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS

Maybe cutting short your high school education and going to college early is right for you. If you do decide to explore this option, you will be in a small minority. It will definitely be an up-hill battle, since many high schools don't like to lose their top students and some colleges are reluctant to accept younger ones. Yet, if you can find the college program that is right for you, early college can be very exciting. Perhaps the best piece of advice the early college applicant can receive is to investigate several different options, and choose the one that feels right.

Peter Stace, Director of Admissions at Ithaca College, notes that about a dozen early admission applications are received each year of a total of 3,000. Rarely are more than one or two admitted. He looks for students who are "achievement oriented" and have something unusual to offer. He says those considering early admission should have exhausted all of their options at their high school.

Almost all colleges require a personal interview for early

admission. This interview is conducted by the admissions office. Prospective applicants are urged to attend several classes, and to set up interviews with professors or deans of students in their field of interest.

In addition to many regular colleges and universities which have an early college option such as the University of Chicago and Rutgers University, there are few colleges which have special programs specifically designed for early admission students. These include Mary Baldwin College's program for exceptionally gifted girls (PEG) in Staunton, Virginia; Simon's Rock of Bard College in Great Barrington, Massachusetts; The Clarkson School of Clarkson University in Potsdam, New York; and Matteo Ricci College of Seattle University in Seattle, Washington. Each has a different focus, but all are designed to help the early college student adjust to the rigors of academic life.

PEG AT MARY BALDWIN COLLEGE

Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Virginia established the PEG (Program for the Exceptionally Gifted) in 1984 for girls who have completed eighth grade. PEG students receive their BA degree after four or five years at Mary Baldwin College. For the first three years they live in a separate dorm with residence counselors who are to provide them with lots of emotional support and programs that are tailored to the special emotional and social needs of young college students. First-year PEG students spend half their time finishing up their high school requirements right on campus, and half taking the regular college curriculum with the traditional Mary Baldwin students. After that, they take all of their academics with the traditional students, although there are still many special activities just for them. PEG students graduate from college at the age when most kids are beginning their freshman year.

For information on the PEG program write the Director of Admissions, Program for the Exceptionally Gifted, Mary Baldwin College, Staunton, VA 24401.

SIMON'S ROCK OF BARD COLLEGE

Simon's Rock of Bard College is the only completely early college in the United States. Its entire co-ed freshman class is made up of students between the ages of 14 and 16. Students get their Associate of Arts degree after two years, when most of their former high school classmates are just applying to college, or they can complete their bachelor's degree by the time they are 19 or 20.

To learn about the program at Simon's Rock, write the Director of Admissions, Simon's Rock of Bard College, Great Barrington, MA 01230.

The focus at Simon's Rock (which was founded in 1968), says Dean Bernie Rogers, "was that you don't simply admit students into a body in which they are a minority, without providing special services for them. We feel the best way to serve these students is to specifically educate them among their peers. An adolescent who is intellectually capable of

doing college work is still an adolescent emotionally." At Simon's Rock close attention is paid to the student's life outside of class. There are many more services available to Simon's Rock students than at traditional colleges, as well as a higher ratio of adult resident counselors.

THE CLARKSON SCHOOL

The Clarkson School was founded in 1971 specifically for talented young people interested in the sciences. It offers a special one year 'bridge' program to students who have finished tenth or eleventh grade and are truly ready for the challenges of college work.

Gary F. Kelly is the headmaster at Clarkson. "We seek out students who have done well in their present setting and who have scored high on their SAT's. Our average math score is 700 (out of a possible 800) and verbal, 600. In addition, we look for the accelerated high school student who has been recommended by the people who know the student best." Basically, Clarkson students have taken all the advanced placement courses offered by their high school, and in all probability, have enhanced their studies at such prestigious summer pre-college programs as The Johns Hopkins Center for the Advancement of Academically Talented Youth, or similar programs at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, the University of Denver in Colorado, or Arizona State University in Tempe.

For information, contact the Headmaster, The Clarkson School, Clarkson University, Potsdam, NY 13676.

The 50 or so students who are admitted to The Clarkson School live in separate housing apart from the regular university students. Each house accommodates from eight to ten students, plus a resident counselor. All enjoy once a week "family" style dinners with Clarkson faculty and staff and get to go on special trips. Students who attend The Clarkson School are expected to transfer to other universities at the end of the year, although a few do opt to continue on at Clarkson University.

All Clarkson School students attend regular freshman courses with the traditional university students. But they receive special attention from their professors.

MATTEO RICCI COLLEGE I AND MATTEO RICCI COLLEGE II

Two Jesuit institutions teamed up back in 1975 to create a unique educational experience for students in the Seattle area. The Seattle Preparatory School, which was once a traditional Catholic high school, and Seattle University, a private Catholic university, decided to test some of the suggestions made by the Carnegie Commission Report on Higher Education

Information on Matteo Ricci College may be obtained from the Dean, Matteo Ricci College, Seattle University, Seattle, WA 98112.

in 1973. The report suggested that high school and colleges should work together to educate students. And the report concluded that while four years of high school followed by four years of college might be right for most students, others would be better off with three years of high school plus three years of college—or some variation of a seven-year program.

So, the two schools teamed up and created Matteo Ricci College I at the prep school, and Matteo Ricci College II at the university. Students at the prep school are provided with a core curriculum based around the sciences, social studies, literature and religion—and their relationship to the world. When they have completed three years at the prep school, students may either apply to any regular four-year college, or enter the Matteo Ricci College II program at Seattle University. If they choose Matteo Ricci II, they continue on with an advanced "core curriculum." After three years they receive a BA in the humanities. Many students stay on at Seattle University for an extra year, and obtain two BA's.

"We look for students who have academic ability as reflected either in grades or the SATs, and who seem to have the motivation to perform at Simon's Rock based upon our experience."
Bernie Rogers, Vice - President
Simon's Rock of Bard College

WHAT ABOUT REGULAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES?

Other colleges and universities throughout the country accept early admissions on a case-by-case basis. Young students who enter traditional colleges may well find that they are one of no more than a dozen early admissions in an entire institution. Yet, successful students, like Lorin and Kimberly, who are mature enough to handle the pressure of college even though they are younger than most college freshmen, are enthusiastic about what they have accomplished. Though many kids run into obstacles before and after they enter college, they generally welcome the challenge to prove themselves.

"The self-imposed pressure is so great that first year, you won't have much time for anything else but study. So don't expect to have an absolutely perfect freshman year if you go early."
Marie Nogel

If academics are truly a priority for you, if you are not getting enough from your high school, if you aren't especially concerned with the social scene in your community, then you may find taking the risk of entering college before completing high school is well worth it.

You can find out if a college you are interested in will accept an early admission student by calling the director of admissions directly — or checking the college catalog carefully. make an appointment to visit the college, and proceed from there.

WHO GOES TO COLLEGE EARLY AND WHY?

Students who go to college as early admissions do so for a variety of reasons, but not all of them are sound ones. So it's important to take a close hard look at your real motives before taking the plunge. Go back to the self-assessment test and renew a picture of yourself. And as you read through the stories of those who went to college early, see if you share some of their goals. Those who are successful in college have a keen desire to learn, are emotionally ready for the challenge, and will work hard to prove they made the right choice. Many of those who choose to leave high school early don't have a large group of friends, and therefore don't mind striking out on their own. Others were popular with their high school classmates, but were eager to try new situations. Said Kimberly, "Studying is a solitary activity. If you think spending five hours a night in the library is fun, then going to college early is for you. People who do well academically have to put in hours of studying by themselves. It's a natural extension of yourself."

But another student warned, " If your sole reason is to party and to get away from your parents, going to college early would be a waste of your time."

Many states or educational institutions operate special programs to encourage minorities and others to enter college programs. Illustrations is the Health Professional Career Opportunity Program operated by the State of California and located at 1600 Ninth Street, Sacramento, CA 95814.

People who choose to go to college early come from a variety of backgrounds. Some are from very small rural high schools and feel they were being held back by teachers who didn't respond to their academic needs. Others have already taken college courses either during summer vacations or as part of their high school curriculum and feel they could handle a full college load. Some are straight "A" students, and are labeled "gifted and talented" by their school districts, but others are doing rather ordinary work in high school because they aren't really challenged.

GIFTED AND TALENTED

Jennifer Lanman from Middlebrook, Virginia, and Ashley Dulac from Barboursville, Virginia, are two of the first students ever enrolled in PEG at Mary Baldwin College, and among its first graduates in May, 1989. Both young women were acknowledged "gifted and talented" students as early as second grade. (That label has a different connotation in different parts of the country, but basically it means that a student has an I.Q. above 140, and has some outstanding ability. This special ability is often encouraged by giving such students enrichment classes which are more challenging than those offered in the regular classroom.)

"I had a hard time understanding why other kids had a difficulty in learning. I never thought about the fact that learning came easier to me."said Jennifer. By seventh grade,

however, she became aware that she was different. Other students would tease her and call her "teacher's pet," and school life became increasingly more difficult. Later in a high school of only 500 people, Jennifer really stood out.

Fortunately for Jennifer her mother, who was enrolled in an adult degree program at Mary Baldwin College, had heard about PEG. She suggested her daughter apply. Jennifer jumped at the chance. "I was really kind of bored. I would go to parties and dances, and I was very involved in sports. But I'd come home from school and do about 15 minutes of homework, and then not have anything else to do. I wasn't going anywhere, and I felt as if I were in a time warp."

The PEG program sounded exciting. It meant that Jennifer could expand her horizons. She was accepted into PEG just after she'd completed ninth grade.

Ashley Dulac was among the original eleven PEG pioneers along with Jennifer. Like Jennifer, she was acknowledged to be "gifted and talented" at an early age and thoroughly bored in her high school. Fortunately, Dr. Christine Garrison, first director of PEG had been a coordinator of the gifted and talented program in the Great Falls, Virginia, school system, where Ashley had attended school. A chance meeting with Dr. Garrison in a shopping mall as PEG was just getting under way was all Ashley neded to spur her on to apply.

College Majors and Your Career: A Resource Guide for Life Planning is available for $15.00 from the Garrett Park Press, (PO Box 190B, Garrett Park, MD 20896).

At first, PEG was only going to accept people who had completed eighth grade, and Ashley was already in ninth. "But I called Dr. Garrison and said, 'you've got to take people who are older. You've got to take me.'" Fortunately for Ashley, she was accepted.

A MIDDLE-TRACK STUDENT

Rhea Houghton came to Simon's Rock after she'd finished her junior year in high school in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. "I knew my senior year wasn't going to be terrific because I was a middle-track student. I wasn't going to have the advantages of the upper track, so it would basically be a blow-off year for me. Also, I wasn't happy socially, so I decided I wanted a change. I didn't have any close high school friends. I spent much of my childhood moving around a lot." Rhea had been to thirteen different schools since kindergarten, and she wanted to be in a school that was totally her own choice. "I wanted to start over again. Even though I was always an "A" to "C" Student, I've always known that I could do as well as I wanted to. When I came to Simon's Rock, I was finally motivated to do well."

PLACED IN THE WRONG HIGH SCHOOL

Rodney Christopher, a minority student from the Crown Heights Section of Brooklyn, New York, didn't make it into either of his two first-choice high schools. He did get into Brooklyn Technical High School, however. Most high schools in New York City have a special focus, and students have to pass exams in order to get into the better ones, if their neighborhood high school doesn't have the program they want. Through a computer foul-up, Rodney's application to his first-choice high school was voided, so he decided to make the best of a bad situation at his third choice, Brooklyn Tech.

"Try everything. Take as many writing classes as possible. Take classes with teachers who will let you rewrite essays and long papers. If you find a teacher who helps you develop your ability to learn, stick with that professor."
Leela Steiner

"I did really well there," he said. "And I didn't hate it. Yet, I didn't know what I wanted to do: I just knew that this wasn't it." In fact, by the end of his sophomore year, Rodney was ranked first in his class of 1,200. He'd taken his PSAT's and received a brochure from Simon's Rock of Bard College. "The brochure was very inviting," he said. And he and his mother visited the campus. "When I saw Simon's Rock and met the people there, everyone was just so friendly. Being from New York City, that was very different. It was actually exciting to say hello to people you didn't know. It made me very happy, and as I was being interviewed, I felt as if I were being treated as if I were older. I realized I was applying to a normal college."

Rodney applied for and received the DuBois Scholarship offered at Simon's Rock, and became a freshman (or 'freshling' as first-year students are called at that college) at 16 .

Most of his Brooklyn friends and teachers were surprised by Rodney's decision to go to Simon's Rock. Even though none of them really knew anything about the college, they told Rodney he was making a mistake. They thought that getting a liberal arts education instead of a scientific one was not a wise thing to do. "But not for me," said Rodney. "I felt there were so many things I wanted to learn that weren't available at my high school. I felt stifled." His mother was completely won over the day of their visit. "She realized that I'd like it here," he said.

A Guide to Careers in Science Writing is available at no charge from the National Association of Science Writers (PO Box 294, Greenlawn, NY 11740).

HIGH SCHOOL WAS JUST TOO EASY

Marie Nogel, from the tiny village of Waterloo, New York, felt that she was wasting her time in her high school. She applied to and was accepted at Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York, after she'd completed eleventh grade. "I was student council president, I started girl's varsity— I had lists and lists of things I wanted to do. And the principal didn't go along with any of them. He'd always fight me every step of the way."

Fortunately for Marie, she found an ally in her guidance counselor. "He's a wonderful man. He'd grown up and had gone to college in the 60's and he had a lot of his 60's ideals. He just accepted me for what I wanted to do. He didn't try to force me into a set pattern."

Marie had gotten mononucleosis in her junior year of high school, and missed virtually all of the spring semester. "I went to one class three times, and got a 98 for the year. When I can miss school that much and still be first in my class, something was wrong.'

"We are looking not so much for the kid who wants to get away as the one who wants to come here; not to escape, but to have the opportunity to learn."
Sara Ketchum, Assistant Director of Program Advancement, Mary Baldwin College

One day when Marie was in the guidance office she casually thumbed through a college catalog. "I was just looking at the pictures, not even reading. Suddenly I saw the words, 'early admission.' I'd never heard of that." Her guidance counselor started to call around and lined up interviews for her at the three nearby colleges—Wells College, Ithaca College, and Cornell University. All three had an early college option. Although Marie had always wanted to go to Cornell, she was afraid that by choosing the large Ivy League university, she'd be in over her head. Instead, she decided on Ithaca College, a medium size liberal arts college. It turned out to be an excellent choice. And, after she completed her freshman year, Marie transferred to Cornell where she is now involved in environmental studies.

FOLLOWING IN HIS SISTER'S FOOTSTEPS

Tim Ryan about whom you read in a previous chapter, was identified as "gifted and talented" in math while he was in elementary school. By the time he'd entered his Groton, New York, juniorhigh school, he was taking algebra. Then he started accelerating in other subjects as well. And by the time he was 16, he had taken the SAT's, and completed virtually all of his required high school subjects.

"Early admissions is different. The younger student has to bring more to the institution because we have to be more flexible. That young student's maturity has to exceed that of the regular freshman."
Howard Erlich, Dean of Humanities and Sciences, Ithaca College

Tim's older sister had also been a gifted and talented student. She'd been accepted into the University of Delaware as an early admissions student several years before. So Tim said, "I'm going to do that too. There is always competition between us."And Tim couldn't stand to have his sister do something he couldn't do.

With Tim's terrific test scores, and his ability to talk his way into sounding like a serious student, he was accepted into the University of Delaware.

I THOUGHT I COULD HANDLE COLLEGE

Leela Steier had gone to alternative public schools from the time she was in second grade in her hometown of Ithaca, New York. he spent her first year of high school at an

alternative school in Teaneck, New Jersey. When she returned to Ithaca the following year, she felt that going any further in high school, traditional or alternative, would be a waste of her time. "I'd already taken a couple of courses at Fairleigh Dickinson University. I'd taken advanced placement summer courses at Smith College, and thought I could handle college," she said.

A free leaflet, Paving the Way. A Parent's Guide to Early Planning for College is available from the National Institute of Independent College and Universities (122 C Street NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001).

Leela was two months short of 15 when she enrolled in Tompkins Cortland Community College in Dryden, New York. She decided on this route because she hadn't taken her SAT's or ACT's, or applied to any college at this point.

Leela found three other Ithaca High School "drop-outs" who had enrolled at the community college that semester. The four of them became close friends. And although she found the academics at the community college less challenging than she'd hoped, it served its purpose. " The community college got me into the semester system, and into taking finals."

After the first semester, Leela transferred over to Ithaca College, where she found her courses extremely rigorous. "I had very hard classes at Ithaca College because my Dad (who is a professor there) had recommended very high-powered teachers to me. I got into college before there were lots of requirements, but it turned out that because I was curious about things, I took a lot of what was later required."

WHAT WAS MOST DIFFICULT FOR THE YOUNG COLLEGE STUDENT

Being accepted into a college program that specifically says you are an "exceptionally gifted" young woman turned out to be a bit scary for both Jennifer and Ashley.

"Look for a college which has classes small enough so you can have easy access to professors and advisors. Advisors are very important. You need to find an instructor you can trust and who has been around for a while. He or she can steer you into good classes."
Kimberly Carter

"I thought I wasn't going to measure up." said Jennifer. I'd heard stories about the kinds of kids who were coming to PEG. And they all sounded like people with IQ's of 200—Whiz Kids. And I was coming from this little high school, and I didn't really think that I was that smart. And I also worried about the social aspect. I was concerned that I wouldn't have any buddies—that all girls would be quiet and withdrawn and not physically active."

It turned out not to be that way at all. Ashley said," We have these wonderful pictures of the very first meeting we'd ever had together. After the parents had left, and we'd all unpacked, the PEG advisors called us together in the commons room. And we all came down and were sitting on these couches—and we were all alike—two on a couch each hugging the arms of the couch—all at opposite ends." But by the next day, she recalled, the girls began to draw together.

Like Jennifer, Ashley believed that everybody else was brilliant. "And I'd think, 'How did I ever get in?' We all thought the others were smarter.

"It was hard to get used to the social changes. We all had so much fun being together. But in a regular high school, you don't wind up living with your friends." By the end of the first semester there were only eight PEG girls out of the original 11, and Ashley admitted that so much togetherness got to be a little stifling. "If one person got upset, it kind of triggered everybody else to get upset. So you'd have eight sad teenagers running around, and our poor staff had to deal with all of us."

Perhaps the most difficult thing for first-year PEG recruits was the fear that the experimental program would be declared a failure during the first weeks.

"You know, a lot of people thought this was an insane idea, and was never going to work," said Ashley. Now, however, that is not a concern.

AFRAID OF NOT BEING ACCEPTED

When Rhea got to Simon's Rock her biggest fear was that "maybe I wouldn't be accepted, and I would have to go back to high school. I didn't have any close high school friends. I spent most of my childhood moving around a lot, and it was very hard for me to get close to people when I had to do it over and over and over again." Happily, she made friends quickly at Simon's Rock—friends she feels she'll have practically forever.

"In evaluating early admissions candidates, we want to be sure that the student will be academically successful, and therefore we require higher grades. Ideally, the student will have between a 3.5 and 4.0 high school average plus SAT scores above 1200."

Carl Anderson, Associate Director of Admissions, University of Delaware

Another Simon's Rock student, Shani Feurgeson, said that most of her fears were unfounded. "I thought I would be homesick and I thought I'd miss my parents and friends, and I really didn't. I thought I would cry and be miserable. But I didn't cry and I wasn't miserable." Shani, like Rhea, was worried that she'd have trouble making friends. So the first semester she neglected her homework. "When anyone came to my door, I was there to talk to them, and if they wanted to do something, such as going out to the movies or into town, I did it because I didn't want them to not knock on my door." However, once Shani relaxed and felt comfortable, she learned how to balance her social life and her studies.

Ba Win, Simon's Rock Dean of Students, says that Shani's experience isn't unusual. The younger college student has special needs. "At this age people love to exchange biographies, and they speak to each other endlessly. Unless they have some ability to balance their pleasures, they will really have trouble. The work here is college work, and students will find out they need some measure of self-discipline." That balance, he finds, usually comes midway during the first semester, when those

students who are doing more socializing than studying find their grades are suffering.

"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysteries. It is the source of all true art and science."
Albert Einstein

FEARS OF FAILURE AND REJECTION

"I was afraid that I was no longer going to do as well as I already had, and that everyone was going to be smarter than me." Rodney recalled. "I was afraid that people wouldn't be interested in the things I was interested in. " But Rodney worried most that, "People were going to realize that I was poor and that was going to matter. I was afraid that there were going to be a lot of people here with lots of money, and I didn't know how that would affect things."

The year Rodney entered Simon's Rock, 21 percent of the entering freshman class were minority students. Although Rodney acknowledges that being black can be an issue, he realizes that being a member of a minority group will always be a problem. "It's not so much that I'm aware that I'm black, it's just that there are many things I'm not used to doing because of where I'm from and that most of these people aren't used to doing them. Sometimes I feel that I'm in a sea of white faces, and sometimes it just doesn't matter. Sometimes I have to adapt to what they want to do, although it is difficult to get (white kids) to adapt to what I want to do."

Coming from a poor family into a college where most of the students had far more money was a major fear of Rodney's. It turns out that he had spent a great deal of his childhood working on making it possible that people would not be aware of his social status. He worked on cultivating his speech, noticing how middle-class kids dressed, and above all, being a good student. More than one student was surprised to discover that Rodney lived in a poor section of Brooklyn. "Why does your family live there?" he was once asked. "Because we have no choice." he replied. "You mean you're not wealthy?" the other student answered in great surprise.

"The six skills required for today's world are reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics, reasoning, and studying."
Academic Preparation and College. The College Board

Rodney has learned two tremendously important things since he's been at Simon's Rock: the first is "I didn't know that everyone has something worthwhile to say. I though only those people with money, only those people who had some position of power were worth listening to. I know better now." And the second is that even though people come to college with vastly different backgrounds, the shared experience of college is an important basis for a friendship.

ADJUSTING TO REGULAR COLLEGE LIFE

Neither Leela nor Marie seemed to have much difficulty with their social lives. This may have been because neither

was very far from home. It also may have been because academics was such a high priority for them. Nevertheless, they encountered some problems that were a bit different from those who entered special programs.

Leela found several kindred souls at the community college. And even after her switch to Ithaca College, she kept in touch with them. But after her first year at Ithaca College, she took a semester off. "I got involved in women's groups made up of students from Cornell and Ithaca College, as well as from the community. That's when I began to make new friends." Leela also didn't want to live on campus, so she found an off-campus apartment with other serious-minded students. " I was under age to drink and couldn't get together with most of the older college students. (Until recently, when the legal age for drinking alcohol was changed from 18 to 21, a great deal of social activity in college towns took place in bars, especially those that featured live bands. Even today, drinking on campus is still a major problem.) But many of my close friends were also high school drop-outs." Like her, they felt high school was a waste of time.

Between 1975 and 1985, there was a 17.5 percent increase in the number of women receiving bachelor's degrees compared to a 4.7 percent decrease for men.

The hardest part of going off to college early for Marie was all of the negative criticism she received from her high school principal and her classmates. "I lost my boyfriend over it, because he couldn't deal with the pressure of seeing me go away and seeing everyone else down on me all the time."

She discovered, however, during the summer orientation at Ithaca College, that special friend who became her roommate, and later, the friends she made were classmates with whom she studied.

LACK OF DIRECTION AND PURPOSE

Tim Ryans's problems as an early admissions student were different. He made friends easily and he didn't find the academics difficult. The trouble was he simply wasn't motivated to do college work. He recognized that his real reason for wanting to be in college was simply to get out from under his parents' supervision. "I was looking to have fun." And he dropped out of college after a year. It took Tim several years of knocking about before he decided that he definitely wanted a college education.

"The problems of the real world are much more like what you find in Hemingway and Faulkner than what you find in a marketing text."
Journal of College Placement, Summer 1985.

COLLEGE COURSES ARE REAL WORK... AND THEY MAKE YOU THINK!

Virtually all of the students reported that their college courses were harder than anything else they'd undertaken—and at the same time the challenge was exhilarating.

"You really did have to work, and you really did have to

think," said Ashley. "I had to work in high school— but I didn't have to think. Now we were writing essays, and you had to put a lot of thought into it. In high school one of the classes might be kind of hard and the rest were OK. Now all of them were hard."

But the hard work has its rewards. A mathematics major, Ashley is now completing a research project with her advisor. Their paper, which will be published and presented to the National Council of Mathematics Teachers, is a highlight of her academic experience.

A highly useful guide is How to Study in College by Walter Pauk sold by Houghton-Mifflin, One Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108 for $23.60.

Going to college early "was probably the best decision I ever made," Ashley confessed. " A lot of people ask if we have any regrets that we didn't graduate from high school or go through college in a normal way. And maybe in about 50 years I'll say, 'Boy I wish I had went to high school.' But I don't think so. We have had so many opportunities and so many experiences that most people never dreamed of."

For Leela, whose alternative style pre-college education might best be described as "quirky," the challenge of college was dramatic. "I almost flunked out during mid-semester at Ithaca because I didn't have the standard background. I couldn't always understand what the professor wanted. In one class I had a D- at mid-term, but by the end of the semester I had a B because the professor talked to me. I'd completely misunderstood how to write a paper." However, she was so quick to learn how to do it, that by her sophomore year she'd gotten a job at the writing lab helping less able students write their papers. And in her junior year, she'd declared her major in philosophy. "I wanted to learn logical thinking. I felt the discipline that could help me most was one that would teach me to think and reason and write logical papers. Thinking and reasoning— with those two skills I could go on to anything." Not surprisingly, the career Leela chose was law.

LEARNING WHO SHE REALLY IS

People complain about the high cost of college but an article in the Chronicle of Higher Education points out that the average cost of tuition, fees, room and board is $60 a day— or about half the cost of a hotel room in Manhattan.

Besides studying more than she'd ever done in high school, Jennifer discovered something important about her goals. She had come to PEG believing that she was destined to become a doctor. Ever since she could recall, people had assumed that because she was a top student, she would do this. So as soon as she could, she declared that she was a chemistry major. It had never occurred to her that she really didn't love the sciences. "In public school, the humanities really aren't emphasized. I didn't get to study the humanities until I took English and philosophy during my second year at PEG—and I fell in love (with those two areas). And I stopped having headaches from bending over my chemistry books. I realized that I really enjoyed the English and philosophy more than science. It was a pretty incredible realization."

LIVING IN THE PROFESSOR'S OFFICE

Marie, too, found that chemistry was "the worst." At 16, to be in an honors chemistry course with 13 others, most of whom were pre-med, was daunting. Yet because the class was small, Marie had the opportunity to get to know her professor. "I almost lived in the professor's office and asked lots and lots of questions." Like many other students who came from very small high schools, Marie had a difficult time learning how to study "differently."

"I never had to study in high school. All of a sudden I was faced with chem and biology, with books that I could barely carry, and I was trying to learn how to study." And learn to study she did. "I did this by reading and reading and reading. I just read everything I could get my hands on. I'd go to the professors' office and ask for further suggested reading. I spent hours and hours reading." This, of course, didn't leave much time for socializing. Like other younger college students she didn't socialize at the college pub, so Marie naturally gravitated towards the more serious students. But she also found time to work 15 hours a week as a caterer. Not only did she make good money, she also met other serious students on the job.

Help with college essays may be found in On Writing the College Application Essay sold for $6.95 by Harper & Row (10 E 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022) or The Admissions Essay selling for $7.95 by Lyle Stuart (120 Enterprise Avenue, Secaucus, NJ 07094).

Virtually all early college students have to learn to study and respond in class differently from the way they learned in high school. Many, but not all, did not do especially well first semester. But generally, by the end of their first year, they hit their stride.

FEELING COMFORTABLE IN THE ROLE OF COLLEGE STUDENT

Once the early college students leave the place they didn't want to be and establish themselves in a college that is right for them, they view themselves as ordinary college students. As their education progresses, some may take a semester or even a year off to study abroad, or to intern for a member of Congress or to do volunteer work for a cause they feel strongly about. Often, being younger than other students competing for the same programs can be an advantage. "The Congressman's administrative aide who interviewed me for the internship felt that I'd already proved I was a capable and mature person, and that I'd probably work harder than some others, " said Leela, who spent a semester in Washington during her junior year.

Perhaps the most common theme that runs through all of the stories of those who chose college early is that for the first time in their lives they were truly intellectually challenged.

"Just as the twig is bent, the tree is inclined."
Alexander Pope

SOME TIPS FOR PARENTS

1. Don't worry about the "pedigree" of the college. Worry about whether your kids are intellectually alive.

2. Remember that most highly motivated kids are really finished with the normal high school curriculum halfway through eleventh grade.

3. Visit the college your child is interested in attending with your son or daughter.

4. Talk to other parents whose children have gone to college before completing high school. Get a variety of opinions from parents, guidance counselors, college administrators and students.

5. Most of all, be sensitive to the needs of your own son or daughter.

Chapter VIII

TAKING THE PLUNGE: I'M READY FOR COLLEGE. WHAT DO I DO NOW?

There are smart and dumb ways to choose a college. "The first time I applied to college," said Jeff Finlay of Raleigh, North Carolina," I figured that one place was as good as another. So I just applied to three state universities because the applications were easy to fill out. I was only accepted at one of them, so that didn't give me much of a choice. Still, I went off with the unrealistic expectation that by just being in college, I'd become an educated person. I got an education, all right, but not the kind I was interested in. What I learned from that experience was that I truly valued myself, and I truly valued learning. When I transferred the following year, I chose my college with great care."

The College Financial Aid Emergency Kit cites numerous sources of assistance and also gives a calendar/time schedule for events leading up to college admissions. Order for $4.50 from Sun Features (PO Box 368, Cardiff, CA 92007).

As Jeff found out, you will probably get accepted to at least one college any way you approach the problem. However, you owe it to yourself to make an informed and thoughtful choice. After all, you and/or your parents will be paying for your college education. If you take out student loans to finance that education, you should feel confident that what you are receiving is definitely worth it. You will be paying off those loans for several years after graduation. That's not a bad thing, but rather in today's college marketplace is a simple fact of life.

A COSTLY INVESTMENT IN YOUR FUTURE

Taking out a loan for your college education may be the very best investment you will ever make. According to Edward B. Fiske author of Best Buys in College Education, "Just about any college can be considered a bargain. ...Figures from the Bureau of the Census show that the typical college graduate can expect to earn nearly 40 percent more than a high school graduate over the course of a lifetime." And, a college education will make you a more interesting person.

"It will," concedes Dr. George Conneman, Director of Instruction at the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University, "be the rare student who graduates from college an independent, debt-free person." In fact, even if you attend a state university, you can look forward to graduating at the end of your four years of college with a $10,000 debt. You must begin to pay that back within six months after graduation. That $10,000 actually translates into a $14,000-plus debt if it is a guaranteed student loan from a bank at the current 8% interest rate. No question, without that college degree, your chances of achieving financial success are seriously limited. And there are ways to minimize your indebtedness by spending a year or even two at a less expensive community college.

The Admissions Process at Selective Colleges gives tips to help improve your chances. Order for $1.95 from Peterson's Guide (PO Box 2123, Princeton, NJ 08543).

However, keep in mind that even when you think you are making a wise choice, the college you finally wind up attending may not turn out to be a perfect match. If you really are unhappy, you can always transfer at the end of a semester, first year or at the end of your sophomore year. People do this all the time—and for a variety of sound reasons. Many students, for example, choose to attend a less expensive community college for a year or two before transferring to a private college. That way, they can save tuition and room and board money for the first years, and still graduate from a more prestigious institution even though they attend it for less than four years. If you wind up at a college you planned to go to for all four years, and it isn't working out, try to figure out what went wrong— how much of the mismatch is your unrealistic expectation, and how much of it is the particular institution itself. Once you understand the problem, you can plan to correct it.

How to Write College Application Essays is available for $1.95 from Peterson's Guides (PO Box 2123, Princeton, NJ 08543).

TRANSFERRING IS ONE WAY TO GRADUATE FROM A MORE DEMANDING COLLEGE

1. A student with a lackluster academic record or with average SAT scores may improve his or her chances of getting into a more prestigious college or university by attending a community college or a less difficult college for a year or two. According to Helene Reynolds, an education consultant in Princeton, New Jersey, "This is an excellent way to improve your chances. If you are able to achieve a 3.0 or a 3.5 average, you can then present yourself to a better college. By then, no one is going to look at your SAT's or high school work," she notes. "And you have an opportunity to create a new record."

2. Colleges often look for transfer students with specific kinds of skills or majors. Says Ms. Reynolds, "Transfer admissions fill a different need within a school." A college may be looking for a tuba player, or the captain of the chess team, or somebody to enter the French department.

3. Many colleges have lower admission standards if you are willing to enter in January (for those on semester system) or in March (for those on the quarter system). This is because colleges always lose freshman students during the first semester.

Financial Aid: A Partial List of Resources for Women is an 18-page summary available for $3.50 from the Project on the Status of Women (1818 R Street NW, Washington, DC 20009).

THINK IT THROUGH

The best way to start thinking about choosing a college is to look at who you are and what kind of an atmosphere you'd like to be in. Since you are probably a pretty independent person (after all, this book wouldn't have interested you in the first place if you hadn't been), you are probably more interested in finding a school that suits your needs than in impressing neighbors with a "name brand" college. Sure, a

degree from the Ivy Leagues may impress a lot of people, including your first future employer, more than a diploma from State home U, but how well you do in the adult working life still depends on how well you use your own innate gifts. Don't be afraid to look into some of the more off-the-beaten-track colleges.

Those of you who won't go to college until you've stopped out for a while will recognize that your education is really in your own hands. Your mind isn't a sausage casing into which some wise old professor will stuff his or her life-long knowledge. You, yourself, will bring to your college experience a great desire to learn— and much of what you will accomplish will be because you've given a lot of thought to your unique qualities during the time you've stopped out.

"Education does not stop with graduation from college. I read a number of periodicals and three or four good books each month. Education is only a ticket to a full life, not an all-expenses guided tour."

Miami University graduate

On the other hand, you who are choosing the option of early college, must pick your college with great care. Even more than the "Johnnie-come-latelies," you need to pay close attention to the social aspects of the college you choose. Experienced education consultant Helene Reynolds of Princeton, New Jersey, cautions that the "social environment into which you are going has to be right. It can't be a college that is going to just promote the intellect. It also should enhance the student's growth." Whether an early college goer or a late one, you want to make the most informed choice you can.

Larry Colman of Winnetka, Illinois, was an early admission student at the University of Chicago. He had just turned 16, and was tremendously excited about going there. "I'd gone for a campus visit," he said, "during one of those weekends the University sets up for prospective students. It was such a great experience. I met dozens of kids who shared my interests, and I spent hours involved in amazing discussions. I was absolutely convinced that this was the place for me." By the end of the first semester Larry had serious doubts about continuing at Chicago. "I could deal with the work load, even though it was sometimes staggering. What was so hard for me is that I had so little social life. Freshman women aren't interested in dating freshman guys—and especially guys who are younger than they are. And I just didn't know where to meet girls my own age."

Making the Most of Your Campus Visit and The Parent's Role in Campus Visits are available, at $1.95 each, from Peterson's Guides (PO Box 2123, Princeton, NJ 08543).

Larry decided to take time out after he completed his first year— and actually found that despite his unhappiness with the social scene, " I really did quite a bit of growing up. And perhaps after a year away, I'll be ready to go back. After all," he said with a sly grin ,"I'll be an upper classman, and by then freshman women won't think of me as a kid."

Some questions you might want to think about are:

1. Am I really ready for college now? (If your answer is still "no," decide just how firm a "no" that is. Some people aren't ready for college until they set foot on campus.)

2. Do I want to live at home and attend college or live on campus?

3. Do I want to stay in my home state or go to another part of the country?

4. Do I want a liberal arts education, or do I have a specific career in mind for which a college can train me? Is that specific training what I want from a college education?Many educators and business people advise students to widen their intellectual horizons through a liberal arts education at the BA level. Many specific job skills can be learned in the work place. And training in the professions is done in graduate schools.

Today, one-fourth of the labor force holds a college degree, compared to one worker in five just 10 years ago.

5. What is my financial situation? Can I actually cope with the high tuition of a private college or a university?

6. Will my grades and SAT scores and financial situation make me eligible for scholarships and financial aid? Or should I consider public institutions or those that receive support from churches?

This is a crucial question that you need to discuss carefully with your family. However , if you have already established your financial independence, you need to investigate a total financial aid package with the college of your choice. Don't let the price tag on a specific college deter you if you are convinced it is right for you. There are many excellent financial aid packages available to students. There are many scholarships which go begging. For example, if you are a direct descendant of a World War I veteran, (such as your grandfather, grandmother or even great-grandparent) and can prove it with a copy of their discharge papers, several state universities, (such as Cornell and the University of Texas) will provide free tuition for a period of the time through the Noyes Scholarship fund. Check with your local Veterans' Administration officer — and the financial aid office of the college.

Small Colleges Can Help You Make It Big cites 700 private colleges with enrollments of less than 3,000. The booklet is free from the Council for Independent Colleges (One Dupont Circle NW, Suite 320B, Washington, DC 20036).

7. Am I looking for a college which will allow me a considerable amount of choice in selecting my courses, or do I want a college where there are stiff requirements so that I'll be forced to study certain subjects I might not on my own?

8. Is there a specific college that I really want to attend?

9. Is there a specific college that my parents want me to attend? Is that a place I would feel comfortable going?

10. Do my grades and SAT scores really reflect my academic abilities?

11. What are my special skills and talents that would be worth noting noting on a college application to make me stand out from other applicants in my range?

12. Do I want to aim for a college that is very competitive academically or one without the pressure of having to elbow my way into that "A"?

13. Do I want a very large, impersonal university where I can melt into the background; a small, intimate one, where everybody knows everbody else; or something in between?

14. Do I want a college where people come from all parts of the country or a region different from mine? This can really be tricky. One eastern born and bred young man, fell in love with the University of California at Santa Cruz, but found it disconcerting that wispy little bean sprouts were sprinkled on virtually everything he ate, including a Kosher corned beef sandwich! Believe it or not, regional food preferences often point up differences you hadn't considered before.

"Thinking is the hardest work there is, which is probably the reason why so few engage in it."
Henry Ford II, Industrialist

15. Am I going to be happy in a college where the fraternities and sororities are a major part of the social scene? Or, conversely, in a setting where they are not?

16. Do I want a college which offers a chance to get involved with the local community?

17. Do I need to be sure there are people who belong to the same religious faith and ethnic group as mine on campus? Or will it be enough to know that outside the college community, I can find my own religious or ethnic group?

The problems associated with graduating high school and getting into college often obscure the need to prepare for college work. A highly useful book, How to Study, is available for $10.95 from the Career Press, 62 Beverly Road, Hawthorne, NJ 07507.

18. Will I want to look for organizations on campus which reflect my political ideals?

19. If I go to college far from home, will I mind not seeing my family more than once or twice a year?

20. Do I want to test the waters in a community college first before attending a more high-powered four-year institution?

After you've answered these questions, go back to your self- assessement test, and take it once again. How do the answers to these questions mesh with your profile on the assessment sheets? Do you think that you have a pretty good idea of what you are looking for in a college at this stage of your life? If so, you are ready for the next step.

INFORMATION GATHERING

Even if you have been out of school for a year or two, if you are still living in your home town, you may be able to go back to your high school guidance counselor and see what advice he or she has to offer. Many high schools have fairly sophisticated computer programs which can help you select some colleges which fit your interests and pocketbook. Your high school guidance office can help with your search.

Another possibility is to locate a professional college consultant who, for a fee, will work with you until you are accepted into a college that seems right for you. Depending on the service, the fee can range from under $100 to over $1000. If you know other people who have used college consultants and are very satisfied with the results, ask them for the name and address, and set up an appointment. Or you might check with the Independent Educational Consultants Association for the name of a member in your area. (Their address is Box 125, Forestlake, Massachusetts 02644.) Professionals can often save you a lot of trial and error because they know the college market so well and are trained to help you make an informed choice.

The Directory of Athletic Scholarships list awards open at hundreds of colleges. Order for $15.95 from Facts on File Publications (460 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016).

If you don't have access to either your high school guidance counselor or a professional college consulant, there are numerous other ways to gather information on your own. If you take your time researching the possibilities, you should be able to make an excellent choice.

First of all, talk your friends who are currently in college. Are they happy where they are? Visit their college, and get a feel for the place. Talk to people who are out of college about their experiences. When you hear about a school that sounds interesting, check it out.

Your public library is a good place to begin to crack the mysteries of which college will be right for you. Check through a wide variety of college catalogs. (Many libraries now have them on micro-fiche, so you won't get the full benefit of holding the thing in your hands.) But spend some time reading through them. When you find ones that appeal to you, write for a current catalog. It can tell you a geat deal about a particular college: what the campus looks like, the kinds of students it attracts, the academic priorities, the fees, living arrangements, outside activities, the kind of courses offered, and much, much more.

Rodney Christopher remarked that the catalog from Simon's Rock of Bard College was very "inviting." He had never heard of the college before, but the catalog caught his eye, and when he'd read it through, he was eager for the next step: a

campus visit. That attractive catalog turned out to be a crucial step in his decision to go to college early.

When Doug Leonard decided to head south to study in North Carolina, he sent for several catalogs and narrowed his choice down to just a few possibilities. "I did this on the basis of the city where I wanted to be, the size of the school I thought would be best for me, and the kind of courses they had to offer. Of course, the fact that the University of North Carolina in Greensboro had a ratio of three women for every man was definitely part of the equation," he noted with a happy grin. And the last bit of information was in the catalog.

Barron's Profiles of American Colleges describes 1,500 institutions and is updated every year. Order for $12.95 from Barron's Educational Services (113 Crossways Park Drive, Woodbury, NY 11797.)

Minority students may be interested in a series of Financial Aid for Minority Students in... The six booklets cover business and law, education, journalism and mass communications, engineering and science, health fields, and awards open to students with any major. Set sells for $20.00 and individual booklets for $4.00 from the Garrett Park Press, (PO Box 190B, Garrett Park, MD 20896).

HOW TO "READ" A COLLEGE CATALOG

College catalogs are meant to entice you. They are filled with photos of beautiful buildings, laughing students and winning athletic teams. They are advertisements for the college. But they offer a great deal of solid information. For example you can find out:

1. How many professors have Ph.D's.
2. From what colleges the professors graduated.
3. The student-faculty ratio.
4. If the department you are interested in has enough professors who reflect different viewpoints (this can be learned from the kinds of courses offered, as well as the universities which trained the professors).
5. If there is a core curriculum.
6. If there is an overall philosophy in the college.
7. If there is a multi-cultural approach to learning and to the student body.
8. If there is a study abroad program.
9. If there is an honor society.
10. If there are extra-curricular activities that appeal to you.
11. If there are requirements you feel are not what you need or want.
12. If transfer credit from summer college courses or study abroad is obtainable.
13. If there is a senior honor's project.
14. If off-campus internships are available.
15. If there are adequate library resources, or if there is access to other nearby college libraries.
16. If there is a physical education requirement.
17. If writing skills are emphasized.
18. If the size and location of the school is right for you.
19. If the religious, racial or ethnic group you belong to is represented on campus.
20. If the price-tag is within your target range.

Even if you are savvy enough to dig out all of the good information in the catalog, it, alone, will not tell you everything. You ought to pore over general college guidebooks such as The Best Buys In College Education, and Profiles of American Colleges. Profiles ranks each college according to how difficult it is to get admitted by "most competitive, highly competitive, very competitive and competitive, less competitive, noncompetitive and special" (this last category is made up of professional schools of music and art).

Best Buys lists 200 colleges which were carefully researched by Edward Fiske, an editor of The New York Times, as offering high quality education at a modest cost. It is worth studying. You may be pleasantly surprised at the number of excellent colleges that sport affordable price-tags. Again, as you go through these books (as well as the others listed at the end of the chapter), jot down colleges that appear to meet some of your needs. Then send for the college catalog. (A simple postcard requesting it, plus your home address, will do.) Colleges are happy to send them to you free.

Preparing for a Successful Campus Interview is available for $1.95 from Peterson's Guides (PO Box 2123, Princeton, NJ 08543).

THE IMPORTANCE OF A CAMPUS VISIT

If you find two or three colleges in one area that seem interesting, arrange your campus visits during the same week. You can do this by phoning or writing the admissions office. Ask for a campus tour, an interview with the admissions officer, permission to sit in on a class or two, and most importantly, an opportunity to talk to professors who teach subjects that interest you. You also will want to talk to some of the other students— if you are not in your home state, you may want to talk with a couple of students from your area. If you are traveling some distance, ask if the college can arrange for you to stay overnight on campus. When you show up for an interview, dress casually — but keep your shirt tails tucked in. If you have special needs and special concerns, write them down so you won't forget to ask about them.

Checking out several colleges during a single week proved extremely helpful to Doug. Among his North Carolina possibilities was one in Raleigh. He had already been accepted there before he visited the campus. "I was really disappointed once I saw the place," Doug said. "Even though I'd written ahead and phoned to make sure the admissions people knew I was coming, when I got there, they seemed totally disinterested in me. They did nothing to make me want to go there. On the other hand, from the moment I set foot on the UNC-G campus, I felt at home. Everybody from the admissions people to the students and the professors I talked to seemed to want me to come here. One of the professors in my field of communications had read my application. She even remembered that I'd had some experience as a DJ back home.

"Everyone knew me at Princeton, but I didn't know anybody, so I was at a disadvantage. People were trying to be very polite and in doing so almost avoided me because they didn't want to come on too strong."
Brooke Shields, BA (with honors) Romance Languages, Princeton University, Class of 1987.

'I can't wait until you come here,' she said. She really made me feel as if my time away from school was well spent.

"It was such a welcoming atmosphere. I knew this was the place for me. Even though it was a fairly small campus, Greensboro is a real city, and there seemed to be a lot of stuff going on there."

Doug's perception of the university and the city proved correct for his objectives. Over the years, he made strong friendships, took classes that were both enjoyable and challenging — and found time to start a weekly newspaper with group of like-spirited students. One summer he remained in Greensboro to work at a local radio station and to study. Doug was always willing to conduct campus tours for prospective students. "As a Yankee, I wanted to be able to return the kind of hospitality I'd received."

Perhaps if Kiran Sigmon had taken time to visit the University of Maine, she would have realized that it was not a good choice for her after her spectacular year of adventure. Once she'd finished her Operation Raleigh stint, she joined a program run by the Amity Foundation, concerned with peaceful relations between American and Chinese students in China. She was sent to the university in Hun Zjo where her task was to speak English to the Chinese students who were learning the language. Then she traveled through parts of China with a group called "Students of the World."

When she returned home, Kiran began to look at various universities which she thought would interest her. "I boiled it down to three: the University of Colorado, the University of Hawaii and the University of Maine. I was only looking at colleges for where they are. I figured that if I was going to other places in the world, I kind of wanted to see what it was like in our country. I lived in the South all of my life, and Maine seemed like a place far away from everything. So I chose Maine."

Kiran arrived on campus to begin her freshman year with high hopes. "Because of the New Zealand and China experience, where we were thrown into situations and had to rely on each other, we were able to form friendships quickly, and they were strong ones. I was kind of expecting the same thing when I came to Maine," she said. "I came here and found that not everyone was anxious to make new friends and to work together, so it was really hard." She also discovered that there were many required courses before she'd be able to take ones she wanted.

Peterson's Guide to Colleges with Programs for Learning-Disabled Students is available for $19.95 from Peterson's Guides, PO Box 2123, Princeton, NJ 08543.

Even before the first semester was over, Kiran had applied to a small liberal arts college back in her home state, where she felt she would have more control over her environment and the

courses she wanted. Although she was frustrated in many ways with her experience at the University of Maine, "I turned that frustration into an understanding that I was asking too much of too big a place. I've learned a lot about Maine, and I've learned a lot on my own. I'm able to think more clearly about my needs and my life's direction."

The Journalism Career and Scholarship Guide and the Journalism Career Guide for Minorities are available free from the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund (PO Box 300, Princeton, NJ 08543).

CHOOSING A "BRIDGE" PROGRAM

"I was taking high school courses when I was in junior high school, " said William Glass of Keene Valley, New York. "And I'd taken literally all of the advanced placement courses my school and the one the next town had to offer by the end of my sophomore year. So my guidance counselor told me about The Clarkson School."

William had a friend who was going to early college at Simon's Rock, and he looked into it. "But, " he said, "it wasn't for me." Nor, he felt, were the regular colleges and universities — even ones like Johns Hopkins or Chicago, which have a history of accepting gifted younger students like William.

The Clarkson School was appealing. "I felt it was something special — I knew I wouldn't get that kind of support at another university where I was just mixed in with everybody else."

How to Choose a College: Guide for the Student with a Disability is available free from HEATH (c/o American Council on Education, (One Dupont Circle NW, Suite 670, Washington, DC 20036).

The Clarkson School is a one-year program designed to help the younger college student bridge the gap between high school and college, and William expects to transfer to a university next year. He feels this was a very wise choice for him. "There are such good relationships between faculty and students here, and we are treated like the regular freshmen. I like the fact that we Clarkson students all live in houses that are separate from the regular college kids. Of course, I'm not thrilled with the first semester midnight curfew, but I guess it makes our parents feel better — and it is lifted second semester."

HOW MANY COLLEGES SHOULD I APPLY TO?

Up until a few years ago, most college-bound students felt safe in applying to three or four colleges. One of these was always known as a "safety" school — often the state university. The others were the colleges that a student really wanted to attend, but knew that the competition to get in might be stiff. Today, however, many students are routinely applying to as many as 10 or even 15 colleges! Even though the numbers of high school students are decreasing, it seems that more and more students are applying to college — or at least large numbers of students are applying to more and more colleges. College admissions officers have no way of knowing which students are applying to 10 or 15 different colleges. All they know is that they are getting more applications than ever

"To be a champ, you have to believe in yourself when nobody else will."
Sugar Ray Robinson

before. In addition, applications are coming from students who, until recently, might not have considered a college education. And the "newcomers" are highly qualified. There are new groups of people — minorities, those with disabilities, others from working-class blue-collar backgrounds — who realize that many high-paying jobs that went to high school grads in their parent's generation, are no longer available. Moreover, colleges and universities are actively recruiting new groups of students. These are important changes that are occurring right now. Bringing in bright, qualified students who once believed that a college education was not within their reach is a very exciting prospect. It assures a greater diversity on college campuses, and benefits everybody. What it means, however, is that gaining admission into college has not become easier just because there are fewer high school students.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING

Many high school seniors today are shocked to discover they have not been accepted into any college. Even students with terrific SAT's and grades from excellent high schools were left out in the cold, although by mid-summer probably many of those same students who'd not been admitted into their first round of colleges found a college to accept them — or decided to stop out for a year and try again.

Once you've made up your mind to go to college, you don't want to be caught in that bind. And there are a number of things you can do to give yourself the best chance to get into the college you prefer:

"The aim of education should be to convert the mind into a living fountain, and not a reservoir. That which is filled by merely pumping in will be emptied by pumping out."
John Mitchell Mason, Theologian

1. Apply to your first-choice college well in advance of the deadline and ask for an early decision. This means that if you are accepted, you need look no further. You simply send in your nonrefundable deposit to hold your place. If you aren't accepted, via early decision, you still have plenty of time to apply to other colleges.

2. Don't be afraid to choose a college that is off the beaten track. If it meets your needs, then it is the right place for you.

3. Many colleges and universities actively seek students who are from a different population or part of the country than their usual student. A qualified student, say, from North Dakota, who applies to an eastern university, may be chosen over an equally qualified student from Scarsdale, New York. In other words, don't be afraid to take chances.

4. Fill out each and every application carefully. Unless your handwriting is really excellent (or unless it is required that you handwrite your essay), use a typewritter (try to use

one with correction tape— too much "white-out" makes you appear careless) or a word processor.

Your personal essay may be the deciding factor in whether or not a college wants you. Admissions people read every single essay carefully — and are pretty adept at figuring out if what you have written is truly yours. Writing from the heart about that which you feel strongly, can be more impressive than trying to sound falsely intellectual. It's fine to get advice on writing that essay (and by all means have someone check your spelling), but you, yourself, have to feel it's right. And, if you are one of those people who can inject a little humor into your writing, it often helps to set you apart from other applicants.

Academic Gamensmanship: Becoming a "Master" Engineering Student was developed by the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering (3 W. 35th Street, New York, NY 10011) and sells for $1.00.

5. Apply to as many colleges as you feel comfortable with (remembering that each one has a nonrefundable application fee), but don't panic and send out applications wildly. A student who would be happy at Swarthmore probably wouldn't do at all well at Shippensburg State, and shouldn't apply to both.

6. If you have been out of school for a couple of years, contact your high school well in advance of your application deadline. This is because the guidance department is busy helping the current crop of seniors get ready for college, and getting hold of your records may not be their top priority. Write, call or visit your school to make sure your records are in order and are mailed out to your college on time. And keep checking back with the college admissions office — and your high school. You also may want to consider retaking your SATs.

The Value of a Liberal Arts Education sells for $1.95 from Peterson's Guides (PO Box 2123, Princeton, NJ 08543).

Chuck Burry discovered too late that his high school records were not complete by the time he'd applied to SUNY Buffalo. "It meant," he said,"that I was not admitted to the program I wanted during the semester I planned to go. And I was really ready for college. So I enrolled in night school the first semester, and then was finally able to transfer into the special MBA program I'd chosen. But if I'd realized how complicated a process it was, I'd have done all the paper work earlier."

STRATEGY CAN BE IMPORTANT

Dan Wallner had determined that the only college he really wanted to attend was the University of Santa Cruz in California. It was the only one he applied to. He didn't get in the first time he applied. But he was determined to go there. He made a plan for himself, and decided to forge ahead. First, he enrolled in the university's special summer program the year he graduated high school. One of the two courses he took was, he felt, outstanding. He really threw himself into it, and wrote

an excellent final paper. His professor agreed that it was a superior piece of research and writing. "So, " Dan said, "I asked this professor if he would write a letter of recommendation so I could reapply for admission the following year." The professor was happy to do so, and gave Dan a glowing recommendation.

Next, Dan went to the admissions office to find out why he'd not been accepted, and discovered his achievement test scores were 30 points below their cut-off. "I knew I really blew off that test, and had no doubt that the second time around I'd do much better," Dan said.

The National Association of College Admissions Counselors (1800 Diagonal Road, Suite 430 Alexandria, VA 22314) publishes a 29" x 36" map showing the location of colleges and universities in the United States which sells for $2.00.

And after spending a summer in Santa Cruz, " I was even more convinced that this was the school for me."

So Dan decided to livein Santa Cruz for the next year, find a job, and take some courses through the University Extension. "I retook the ACT's as soon as they were offered, scored 100 points higher than before, and submitted a new application with a letter of reference from my summer school professor. But I was really worried. I started hearing that thousands of students were applying to Santa Cruz, and I thought, 'Oh, heck, I'm going to be just one of thousands.' I decided to make myself known to the admissions people."

Periodically over the next months, Dan stopped in to speak to an admissions officer. He checked with her to make sure all of his records and recommendations had arrived. He chatted about the courses in the Extension College he was taking, and how much it meant to him to study at this university. " I made it pretty clear that Santa Cruz was the only school for me. I guess it worked, because one day I got a phone call telling me 'unofficially' I was accepted, and I got the acceptance letter in the mail in a couple of days."

A free catalog of the 1,000 colleges and universities which offer cooperative education programs is available from the National Commission for Cooperative Education (360 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115).

Certainly this was not an ordinary strategy, but it worked because Dan was very clear on what he wanted to do — and because he'd chosen a university that was realistically within his academic abilities.

So even if you blow your chances of getting into your first-choice college the first time around, if you are sure it's the right place for you, you can plan your life so that the next time you apply, you'll have a better chance to get in.

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus (504 C Street NE, Washington, DC 20002) distributes an eight page College Cost Finder to help students plan and finance higher education.

Appendix I

A SHORT LIST OF SELECTED COLLEGES

By 2000 it is estimated that 80 percent of women ages 25-54 will be in the labor force, compared to 39 percent in 1972.

Looking through lists and lists of colleges can be a daunting undertaking. With so many to choose from, it's small wonder most people are confused. Perhaps the ones mentioned throughout the book will be worth exploring. The addresses of some of the early colleges, PEG at Mary Baldwin, Simon's Rock of Bard College, The Clarkson School at Clarkson University, Matteo Ricci I and II, are listed in chapter VII. Several people who were interviewed mentioned somewhat off-beat colleges that appealed to them. I'm including a very select list of colleges and universities for your consideration. Many of them I've chosen because they ask something very specific of the student: that he or she take part in community service, or study and work in a third world country, or that encourage students to design their own major, or that combine study and work. I've also looked for colleges which address specific minority concerns: schools which are totally handicapped accessible, or schools which have strong programs in Black Studies or Latin American affairs. In no way is this a comprehensive list, nor are the colleges listed here the most prestigious ones — rather, they are some of the often overlooked treasures in our vast higher educational system. Perhaps one of these will be right for you.

1. Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina 28607 — A small liberal arts college that is part of the state university system. Within the university is Watauga College which attracts about 100 students who live and study apart from the rest of the university students. Those who are enrolled at Watauga College design their own major fields of study.

"The great use of life is to spend it for something that outlasts it."
William James

2. Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903 — The academic year is divided into 9 blocks of time lasting for 3-1/2 weeks. During each block of time students concentrate on a single course. Students may design their own majors, and there are concentrations in such areas as Black, Asian, Latin American and urban studies.

3. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, Florida 32014 — A unique university that is located at Daytona Beach Regional Airport. There is a second campus in Prescott, Arizona. Undergraduate degree programs are in aviation education, including pilot training.

4. New College of the University of South Florida, Sarasota, Florida 33580 — The campus, which overlooks Sarasota Bay, is situated on the grounds of the former Ringling Brothers

summer home. The college has strong programs in the liberal arts, including environmental studies, English, fine and performing arts, philosophy, math and sciences. Students receive written evaluations instead of grades, and are encouraged to design their own majors. All students are required to do independent studies.

5. College of the Atlantic, Bar Harbor, Maine 04609 — It's devoted to the study of ecology. It is situated on a grand old estate on scenic Frenchman's Bay within walking distance of the Atlantic Ocean and Acadia National Park. Here students design their own programs within the areas of environmental design, environmental sciences, human studies and public policy.

6. Cornish Institute, Seattle, Washington 98102 — It's located in the heart of Seattle and focuses on the arts — ceramics, sculpture, design and dance. Students have to find their own housing, since the college isn't a residential one. Special attention is paid to students with handicapping conditions, particularly those in wheelchairs: lowered telephones, specially equipped restrooms.

Summer on Campus: College Experiences for High School Students is available for $9.95 from College Board Publications, PO Box 886, New York, NY 10101.

7. World College West, 101 South San Antonio Road, Petaluma, California 94952 — The average age of the students at World College West is 20 years old. All first-year courses are team taught and interdisciplinary in nature. Second-year students may study and work in either Nepal or Mexico. Third-year students may study in China. This is an experimental college that places emphasis on academic study, cooperative work experience and student participation in campus governance. Study abroad, though optional, is encouraged. The academic year is divided into four 12-week quarters. Students study full time for two quarters and work in paying jobs for two.

8. Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana 47347 — This college was established by the Society of Friends, but is non-sectarian. Students are encouraged to design their own programs and to take part in any one of the 27 programs offered in foreign countries. Virtually the entire campus is handicapped accessible.

9. Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana 46526 — It was founded by the Mennonite Church, an historic peace group. Offers a study-service tri-mester abroad, 14 weeks of work and study. Requires international studies for graduation. Campus is equipped with wheelchair ramps and elevators, and can provide sign language courses and interpreters for the hearing impaired.

10. Palm Beach Atlantic College, 1102 South Olive Avenue, West Palm Beach, Florida 33401 — The college

centers its educational philosophy around a program called "Workship." Workship requires that each full-time student donate at least 200 hours of his or her time to community service over a four-year period. The college is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, and most students are Baptists.

11. Shimer College, P.O. Box A500, Waukegan, Illinois 60085 — It offers early admission to qualified students who have not completed high school. Students who enter under this program receive a high school certificate after completing six courses and two semesters with traditional college students. The core curriculum centers around The Great Books of the Western World, but students may create their own majors.

12. Howard University, Washington, D.C. 20059 — It has a special mission to make higher education available to Black students. Virtually the entire campus is handicapped accessible for wheelchair bound students, and counselors are available to help students with other handicapping conditions.

13. Gallaudet College, Washington, D.C. 20002 — This is the only private liberal arts college for the deaf. For the first time in its more than 100-year history, it currently has a deaf president. Offers an intensive one year pre-college remedial program for students with academic deficiencies.

14. Alverno College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53215 — This a small Roman Catholic women's college that prides itself on its pioneering attitude in how students are assessed. Students must demonstrate competence in eight 'abilities,' — problem solving, communication, analysis, valuing, social interaction, taking responsibility for the global environment, effective citizenship and aesthetic response. Students either pass or fail courses. No grades are given. They get oral and written feedback from faculty.

A free booklet, How to Survive Freshman Year, is available from the Office of Public Relations, Loyola University, 820 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611.

15. North Texas State University, Denton, Texas 76203 — NTSU not only has special access facilities for wheelchair bound students, there are interpreters for the visually and hearing-impaired, and the library includes Braille books and tapes.

Sometimes a two-year or a community college will be just what you are looking for, especially for students who have stopped out for a while and wish to renew their academic skills. Your local community college may offer the opportunity to get back into the swing of academic life. However, some two-year colleges offer very unique programs leading to an associate of arts or science degree that can't be obtained anywhere else. Three which I found particularly intriguing are:

1. Bel-Rea Institute of Animal Technology, 1681 South Dayton, Denver, Colorado 80231 - The Institute offers an associate degree in animal technology. Courses run for six consecutive quarters including summers for 18 months. Students attend classes for five quarters and take part in a paid internship program during the sixth quarter. The degree prepares them for para-professional work in veterinary medicine.

2. Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, New York 12538 — It awards an associate of occupational studies degree. The program operates through the year with new classes starting every three weeks — 16 times a year. Students get hands-on experience in cooking and baking as well as theoretical knowledge that underlies competence in both fields. Students also work at paid internships.

"Life is work and everything you do is so much more experience."
Henry Ford, Industrialist

3. Navajo Community College, Tsaile, Arizona 86556 and P.O. Box 580, Shiprock, New Mexico 87420 — This is the first Indian-owned and operated college on an Indian Reservation. Begun in both Arizona and New Mexico in 1968, Navajo Community College offers numerous associate of arts degrees including one in Navajo bilingual education.

Appendix B

RESOURCES ON COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Among the most used books in any library are those which describe colleges and universities. You can always spot them because the covers quickly get battered through heavy use. Here are some books that may help. Dates of publication are not given as most of these books are revised frequently.

I" have tried simply to write the best I can; sometimes I have good luck and write better than I can."
Ernest Hemingway

American Universities and Colleges Washington: American Council on Education. Describes around 2,200 accredited institutions.

Barron's Guide to the Most Prestigious Colleges Westbury, NY: Barron's Educational Services. Profiles several hundred colleges and universities with the highest entrance standards.

Chronicle Four-Year College Data Book Monrovia, NY: Chronicle Guidance Publications. Summarizes information on around 2,000 four-year colleges.

Chronicle Two-Year College Data Book Monrovia, NY: Chronicle Guidance Publications. Describes junior and community colleges with particular emphasis upon their occupational and transfer programs.

College Blue Book New York: Macmillan Publishing Company. A five-volume set which includes descriptions of colleges and universities and financial-aid offerings.

The College Cost Book New York: The College Board. Provides information to help plan for the cost of attending college.

The College Handbook New York: The College Board. Summarizes information on 3,000 two and four-year colleges.

The Woman's Art Journal features articles on women in all phases of the creative arts. For information contact the Journal at 7008 Sherwood Drive, Knoxville, TN 37919.

The College Money Handbook Princeton: Peterson's Guides. Cites costs at four-year colleges and provides background information on the financial-aid process.

Community, Junior and Technical College Directory Washington: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges. Describes accredited two-year colleges.

Comparative Guide to American Colleges New York: Harper & Row. Describes and briefly evaluates accredited institutions.

Global Guide to International Education New York: Facts on File Publications. Cites opportunities for overseas study in 150 countries.

Handbook for College Admissions Princeton: Peterson's Guides. Covers topics to help students and their parents cope with admissions procedures and requirements.

Index of Majors New York: The College Board. Lists around 400 majors and tells which colleges offer them.

The Insider's Guide to Colleges. New York: St. Martin's Press. Developed by the Yale Daily News. This publication seeks to present the student's view of institutions.

National College Databank Princeton: Peterson's Guides. Groups colleges to help students pinpoint institutions of particular interest.

"Analyzing what you haven't got as well as what you have is a necessary ingredient of a career."
Grace Moore, Opera Singer

Peterson's Guide to Four-Year Colleges Princeton: Peterson's Guides. Describes accredited colleges and universities.

Peterson's Guide to Two-Year Colleges Princeton: Peterson's Guides. Profiles around 1,400 two-year colleges.

Peterson's Competitive Colleges Princeton: Peterson's Guides. Describes around 300 colleges with high admissions standards

Peterson's Guide to College Admissions: Getting into the College of Your Choice. Princeton: Peterson's Guides. Contains both information on individual institutions and general advice on college admissions.

Your College Application New York: Macmillan Publishing Company. Advises on how best to take the various steps in the process of applying to college.

And a Final Note

FOR PARENTS, ONLY

This is the only section in the book that is not directed to students. Instead, it is an open letter to your parents.

Dear Mom and Dad,

Being a conscientious parent of teenaged kids today is probably almost as difficult as being a teenager. Our kids live in a world not of their making. More dangerous stuff is readily available to young people today than there ever was when we were their age. They are constantly faced with difficult choices we never had to consider: drugs, alcohol, lethal weapons, an increasingly polluted environment, and a rapidly changing economy. Our concept of family life is also undergoing vast changes, and both we and our children often have to deal with painful situations that were completely unknown to our generation.

"Children are likely to live up to what you believe of them."
Lady Bird Johnson

In addition to trying to cope with all of the forces outside of themselves, today's youth are grappling with the same big questions we and our parents and grandparents dealt with: Who am I ? What do I really believe in? Do I look all right? Am I attractive (or handsome) enough to attract that guy or gal sitting next to me? Do my parents love me? Am I in control of my life? Am I making the right choice? What's the purpose of my life?

What may be the biggest surprise is that despite all of the stresses and unknowns, our children have an incredible spirit of adventure. They are ready and willing to take some risks early in their lives because they sense that when they are older, those opportunities might not be available to them.

A set of nine free booklets designed to help students with various aspects of college life (How to Write Clearly, How to Use a Library, How to Make a Speech, etc.) are available from the International Paper Company. Contact "College Survival Kit," (PO Box 954, Madison Square Station, New York, NY 10010).

Perhaps the most difficult thing parents of teenagers have to cope with is their children's passion. Most 16 and 17 year olds aren't often very adept at presenting a cogent and well-thought out argument, especially to the people who mean the most — Mom and Dad. When kids discuss plans with their friends, it all seems to make good sense. When the same kid tries to explain to a parent why he wants to work for a year or two, or study abroad, the words tend to tumble out in unintended abruptness. What begins as a discussion can quickly turn to anger, and can end in a failure of understanding on both sides.

I guess we all have some sort of notion of what we'd like our children to do and be. We want them to move ahead with a good education, a secure future and a lot of joy and happiness.

There probably isn't a parent alive who doesn't want his or her child to avoid youthful mistakes. Yet we know that no child grows up without making decisions that have turned out to be wrong ones, without arguing with parents, without striking out on his own. My writing teacher used to remind her class that, without conflict, there is no story. And in real life, without conflict, a person doesn't change and grow.

Several parents whose children were interviewed for this book were kind enough to share their feelings about the paths their offspring had taken.

"Correction does much but encouragement does more."
Goethe

Gretchen Graef's daughter, Kate Churchill, was one of the first high school students to take part in the internship program at Jacob's Pillow in Massachusettes. Ms. Graef argues persuasively that "Young people should take a crack at whatever they want to to. Different possibilities exist at different ages," she maintains. Using herself as an example, Ms. Graef went on to say that she had been a social worker for most of her adult life, yet at age 50, she is about to begin law school. In today's rapidly changing world, Ms. Graef suggests that "choices that were appropriate at one stage of life, are not necessarily the ones to stick with forever." Currently, Kate has just returned from a semester in London, England, where she studied acting and directing at a well-known repertory theatre, and she is now completing a semester of study with the Eugene O'Neil Repertory Theater in Waterford, Connecticut. Kate expects to graduate from Connecticut College next year. Whether or not Kate is destined for a career in the theater is not the issue for Ms. Graef. But the fact that her daughter is working at something she loves "is fine with me," she says.

"A father is a man who expects his son to be as good a man as he meant to be."
Frank A. Clark

Robert Sigmon's daughter, Kiran, stopped out for a year before attending college. Her stint with Operation Raleigh in New Zealand, and then with the Amity Foundation in China, has left Kiran with a strong desire to travel and to work with people in third world countries. Mr. Sigmon, who is the associate director of an outreach education program at Wake Medical Center in Raleigh, North Carolina, is delighted with the challenges Kiran has accepted. "Although it's partly genetic," he said jokingly. "Her mother, whose parents were missionaries in China, and I actually met in Pakistan. I suppose that being adventurous is our daughter's legacy." What is especially gratifying to the Sigmons is that "Kiran has accepted the responsibility for what she's doing. I think she'll land on her feet. The awareness of the world about her that she's developing — well I couldn't be more pleased. A lot of parents ask me how I could have let her go off like that — and I answer that 'I didn't let her go — she just went.' My wife and I hoped that our daughters would define themselves by who they are and not by external things such as husbands or jobs. The kind of things that Kiran is doing helps her to define herself. All kids should have their own odyssey between the

ages of 16 and 20." Currently, Kiran is designing her own international relations major at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina — and is organizing a group of young people to bicycle across the United States in conjunction with the Overseas Development Network during the summer.

Jennifer Lutman is among the first five young women to graduate from PEG — the Program for Exceptionally Gifted girls at Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Virginia. At 19, Jennifer has been accepted into the Phi Beta Kappa honor society, and has garnered many of the top awards at the college. Her mother, Peg Gerber, acknowledges that at times it was difficult to accept the possibility that something of her daughter's childhood was lost. Still, she said, "We wept about squeezing this exceptional child into a traditional high school experience. We live in a rural area — and if Jennifer had gone to high school here, it would have been a lesser experience. It's not that the things which are taught there are wrong, it's just that it wasn't the right place for Jennifer. What I wanted for my daughter through an early college education was a 'green light' for her." And to her family's delight, they have watched Jennifer's intellectual gifts flower and grow over the past four years.

"Before I got married, I had six theories about bringing up children. Now I have six children and no theories."
Earl of Rochester

At this point both mother and daughter are considering whether or not a year or two away from the pressures of college life before going on to graduate school in anthropology might not be a good idea. From Ms. Gerber's point of view the idea of her daughter completing her requirement for a Ph.D while still in her early 20's could be a big plus. As a women who has three undergraduates degrees, and had supported two children while obtaining a teaching degree as a single mother, and now has three children under 10 with her second husband, runs a farm and teaches high school, Peg Garber recognizes the value of establishing a career early on. "Yet I think Jennifer is still a bit young to become a professional," she says. Perhaps some breathing space is in order.

The average baby born today will retire in 22,463 days.

My plea to parents is to set aside your notions of what you want for your kids, and really listen to what they are saying. Some of their ideas and goals may sound totally naive, even crazy. And you may be tempted to tell them so. Don't. Let them talk. Some of their hopes and dreams may break your heart in their simple yearning. Some of those desires may touch your own hidden dreams, and you may be astounded to find how much like you your children really are — or how much like a half-forgotten member of your family.

I interviewed literally dozens of young people for this book. Each of them was simply wonderful to talk to. They were full of plans and full of life. They were thrilled that I wanted to know what they'd done. They were honored that I wanted to know how they figured things out. Some of them

confessed that after talking to me, they'd decided to make some changes in their plans. Those young people who stopped out for a year or two before going on to college had such a marvelous sense of purpose. One of my respondents had stayed out of school for four years — and I know that his parents were fearful that he'd never go on to college. Yet, once he had made up his mind to go, he went through a five-year undergraduate and MBA program in three years.

Another young man is starting his second year of exploring life outside the academic halls. His parents and stepparents are all professional educators, and they were all dumbfounded when this bright young man refused to consider college, and hit the road.

"The joys of parents are secret, and so are their griefs and fears."
Francis Bacon

"I think I'm finally looking for a place to settle down," he told me. I know that his folks are still worried he won't use his considerable intellectual talents. But in all of his talks with me, he's never ruled out a college education somewhere down the line. It surely won't be exactly the program his parents might have preferred, but his inquiring mind will eventually lead him to an interesting, if off-beat, career.

All kids are not alike. They learn in different ways and at different rates. We all recognize this in little children—why should we expect our teens to be any different?

"The family is a miniature commonwealth upon whose integrity the safety of the larger commonwealth depends."
Felix Adler

If your children complain about not learning anything in high school — listen to what they are saying. Maybe they've gotten all they can out of the place. They, better than anyone else, know what they are capable of. Give them a chance. If going to college early is what they really want to do, encourage them; explore the options; don't let young minds wither in an uninteresting and mind-deadening high school setting. On the other hand, take care not to push them into early college. Let a child know that if it doesn't work out, that's OK, too. There really are lots of options out there, and lots of things to try.

I believe the more you treat teenagers with trust and respect, the more they will take up the challenge to act in responsible ways. You may say, "You don't know my kid." And that's perfectly true. But as a person who has spent a major part of her adult life teaching and writing about kids and education, I do know that the more you try to push certain kinds of young people into a mold, the more they will rebel. And the sooner teenagers have the opportunity to make decisions for themselves, the sooner they will be in control of their own lives — and take responsibility for both the successes and the failures.

The reward for encouraging your children to make their own choices, and giving them enough help to allow them to be

"What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child that must be the community want for all its children."

John Dewey

successful, is that the trust and respect you offer gets returned.

I hope that this modest book will help your son or daughter make some important decisions about their future — and that you will find it within yourselves to support their choices.

Sincerely,

Bryna J. Fireside

Bryna J. Fireside

TO THE READER

If, after reading this book, you decide to choose your own unique path, I'd like to hear from you. I'd like to know what you did and how it worked out. What was good about your experiences? What was difficult? How did you deal with the difficult parts? If you took part in a program not mentioned in CHOICES, and think other young people would be interested in it, let me know. Perhaps I can include your story in the next edition of this book. Please include your name and address, and send your comments to:

Bryna J. Fireside
CHOICES: A STUDENT SURVIVAL
GUIDE FOR THE 1990's
102 The Commons
Ithaca, New York 14850